

Repent ye, (O change your minds) and believe the gospel, MARK i. 15.

O The great comfort, that GOD requires only faith ; and such a faith which is his own gift, and is held forth truly to every one that will receive his pardon, grace, and love. But that this may not be understood of presumptuous notions in our heads, it is well to be observed, that true repentance goes before faith ; by which the heart is not only convinced of sin, and filled with godly sorrow, but changed so as to hate and abandon all sins. It is not enough to leave off some of our sins, or be outwardly reformed ; but it must be an inward and thorough change of the whole mind ; for if one sin be reigning, we cannot be said to have repented, and received that faith and power of GOD which overcomes the world and sin.

Mistaken souls ! that dream of heav'n,
And make their empty boast
Of inward joys, and sins forgi'v'n,
While they are slaves to lust !

Vain are our fancies airy flights,
If faith be cold and dead ;

None but a living pow'r unites
To CHRIST, the living head.
'Tis faith that purifies the heart ;
'Tis faith that works by love ;
That bids our sins and lusts depart,
And lifts our souls above.

What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch, MARK xiii. 37.

ON a day set apart for the celebration of some great event, how anxious are the people to get in time to the place appointed? what earnestness is to be seen in their looks? As earnest should we be in watching for the hour in which our LORD shall come, that we may not be ashamed before him. A heart deceived by sin may suggest many arguments against this holy earnestness, but they are the reasonings of folly. It is a general warning, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, WATCH." Almost every day affords an instance of some one hurried into eternity on a sudden. Was not hourly watchfulness necessary, a merciful GOD would not permit such sudden deaths. But he has sounded the alarm, "Ye know not what hour our LORD doth come." Give me grace, O LORD, to live always as if I heard that solemn voice sounding continually in my ears, "Awake, ye dead, and come to judgment."

Awake, my drowsy soul, awake,
And view the threat'ning scene;
Legions of foes encamp around,
And treach'ry lurks within.

Now to the work of GOD awake,
Behold thy master near;
The various, arduous task pursue,
With vigour and with fear.

The awful register goes on,
Th' account will surely come;
And op'ning day, or closing night,
May bear me to my doom.

Tremendous thought! How deep it strikes!
Yet like a dream it flies,
Till GOD's own voice the slumbers chase
From these deluded eyes.

Now also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not, PSALM lxxi.

18. *O keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me: for I wait on thee, PSALM xxv. 20, 21.—Divine answer; Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am He, and even to your hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you, ISA. xlvi. 3, 4.*

GOD never does nor can forsake me, since I am as near and as closely united to him as a child which is carried in the mother's womb. O great comfort! what can I have to fear? May I not expect every thing now confidently from him? Yes, and this is what pleases him above all things. Therefore I will “be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and “supplication, with thanksgiving, make my requests known unto him,” PHIL. iv. 6. always trusting that he will as certainly carry me through all difficulties to come, has he has done hitherto; so that I can even give him thanks for it beforehand. O LORD, grant that I may practise this better still.

My God, my everlasting hope,
I live upon thy truth;
Thine hands have held my childhood up,
And strengthen'd all my youth.

Still has my life new wonders seen,
Repeated ev'ry year;
Behold my days that yet remain,
I trust them to thy care.

Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these; but thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, &c. JER. vii. 4, 5. Of true prayer and worship in spirit and in truth, see also JOHN iv. 24. ROM. xii. 1. JAMES i. 27.

AS a contrite heart is the most pleasing temple of God; so speaking with God, in words of our own, as a child does with his father is the best book of prayer. The most cunning method, by which Satan deceives many now, is, the mistaking of an extensive knowledge and assurance of their own making for true faith; or trusting on some outward forms of worship, sensible motives, or communion with others; and pretending too soon to evangelical experiences, liberties, and building of souls up; though there was never a true change wrought in their own hearts. For what can all our reading, prayers, going to church and sacrament profit us, without this? Before all this shall be acceptable to the LORD, we must be renewed in our minds, and prove by our own words and deeds that we are the living temples of God.

Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone
The LORD of every motion there:
Then shall my heart from earth be free,
When it has found repose in Thee.

O hide this self from me, that I
No more but CHRIST in me may live!
My vile affections crucify,
Let not one darling lust survive:
In all things may I nothing see,
Nothing desire or seek but Thee.

Forsake me not, O LORD my GOD, be not far from me.—Divine answer; The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that has mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and comforted; behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones, ISA. liv 10—15.

SUCH as have never been destitute of comfort, do not relish this word. O LORD, as thou hast once quickened me by it in great distress, I will henceforth evermore take hold of it; and firmly believe, even without feeling, that thou wilt perform every thing punctually. Thou being my GOD in covenant, wilt never forsake me, but order all things for my good, adorn and carry me through, though all tempests should fall upon me, and every thing be dashed to pieces. This thy faithfulness requires.

Firm are the words which prophets give,
Sweet words on which believers live;
Each of hem is the voice of GOD,
Who spoke and spread the skies abroad.
O! for a strong, a lasting faith.
To credit what th' Almighty faith!

T' embrace the message of his Son,
And call the joys of heav'n our own.
Then should the earth's old pillars shake,
And all the wheels of nature break,
Our steady souls should fear no more
Than solid rocks when billows ro.e,

Lean not unto thine own understanding, PROV. iii. 5. Be not wise in your own conceits, ROM. xii. 17. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with GOD, 1 COR. iii. 19.

WHOSOEVER will do the will of the **LORD**, and is not wise in his own conceit, avoiding vain curiosity, and praying earnestly, shall certainly know the counsels and will of **GOD**, JOHN viii. 17. But he must depend more upon the word of **GOD** than his own feeling; since our own spirit often mixes with spiritual sensations, and tempts us to lust, fear, presumption, and pride: and many trust even to their scandalous whims and fancies, as if all were from our Saviour. O **LORD**, grant that I may be always jealous over myself, go in and out with prayer, and not err in any thing to the hurt of my soul.

Thus saith the Wisdom of the **LORD**,
 Bless'd is the man that hears my word;
 Keeps daily watch before my gates,
 And at my feet for mercy waits.
 The soul that seeks me shall obtain
 Immortal wealth and heavenly gain;

Immortal life is his reward,
 Life and the favour of the **LORD**.
 But the vile wretch that flies from me,
 Doth his own soul an injury;
 Fools that against my grace rebel,
 Seek death, and love the road to hell.

— *So we preach, and so ye believed, 1 COR. xv. 11.*

THE method of the gospel is this: first it proposeth and declareth things which are properly and peculiarly its own; so the apostle sets down the constant entrance of his preaching, 1 COR. xv. 3. It reveals its own mysteries, to lay them as the foundation of faith and obedience; it inlays them in the mind, and thereby conforms the whole soul unto them. See ROM. vi. 17. GAL. iv. 19. TIT. ii. 11, 12. 1 COR. iii. 11. 2 COR. iii. 18. This foundation being laid, without which it has, as it were, nothing to do with the souls of men, nor will proceed unto any other thing, with them by whom this its first work is refused; it then grafts all duties of moral obedience on this stock of faith in CHRIST JESUS. This is the method of the gospel, which the apostle Paul observes in all his epistles; first he declares the mysteries of faith, that are peculiar to the gospel, and then descends unto those moral duties which are regulated thereby; so we must first hear the gospel, and be acquainted with its discoveries, before we can believe aright; and when our faith is rightly founded, it is to shew itself in the practice of all those good works that are required of us in the scriptures. “As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? Gen. xxxix, 9.

JOSEPH was a slave, and in a strange country; he was tempted by a lascivious and vindictive mistress; had he complied, he would have been sure of secrecy and rewards; but if he resisted, he might expect her keenest resentment, if not a deprivation of his life. Yet all these could not influence him; he chooses to submit to every inconvenience and danger, rather than be guilty of so foul a crime, and sin against God. From hence we may learn, that the fear of God is a most effectual preservative against all criminal indulgences; it was this that restrained Joseph, and will have the same on all mankind upon all occasions, and in every scene of life: It strikes every passion every spring of the human actions, and includes in it all the most powerful motives, by which the conduct of mankind is determined. If interest be the principal thing that sways us, that surely cannot be so certainly promoted, as by securing the favour of God, and avoiding his displeasure. If we are governed by our fears, he is the most formidable Being in the universe, to a mind that has perverted its faculties, and transgressed the laws of its nature: If by hope, he is the supreme good; if by love, he is the most amiable and perfect excellence; if by gratitude, he is the author of all our happiness.*

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I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, &c. 2 KINGS xxii. 8, 19.

THE priests, probably to save themselves the trouble of writing, and the people of reading the book at large, had furnished themselves with abstracts of the law, leaving out, or slightly mentioning, many parts thereof, and particularly the promises and threatenings; which Josiah was so much affected with, as being new to him. The book of God's law seems in our day to be lost, or a sealed book, to most of the congregations that profess themselves christians; imperfect hoodwinking abstracts of it are adopted, that hide the promised blessings, threatenings, and curses of God. When this book by spiritual light is found, and on reading, or hearing thereof, conviction reaches the conscience, it is a great instance of God's favour, a token for good, and must be faithfully acknowledged as such. Reader, art thou truly apprehensive of the weight of God's wrath, and solicitous to obtain his favour? Seek then earnestly upon thy knees, and in the house of the LORD, redemption from the curses of the law; pray that Jesus may be revealed to thee; the blood of that Lamb of God alone can take away the guilt of sin; having found the law, rest not till thou find the gospel also, and arrive at a comfortable assurance of thine interest in its blessings. Josiah's heart was tender, he wept, and was encouraged; follow his sorrow, and thou wilt partake of his blessings; and make the law of God thy delight and counsellor.

Draw me, we will run after thee: The king hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee. In thee, the fatherless findeth mercy, SONG i. 4. HOSEA xiv. 3.

THE needle's point in the seaman's compass never stands still, but quivers and shakes till it comes right against the north pole: The wise men of the east never rested till they were right against the star which appeared unto them; and the star itself never stood still till it came right against that other STAR, which shone more brightly in the manger, than the sun did in the firmament: And Noah's dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot, all the while she was fluttering over the flood, till she returned to the ark with an olive-branch in her mouth: So the heart of every true christian, which is the turtle-dove of JESUS CHRIST, can find no rest all the while she is hovering over the waters of this world, till it have the silver wings of a dove, and with the olive-branch of faith flies to the true Noah, which signifieth *rest*, till CHRIST put forth his hand out of the ark, and taking it in, receiveth it to himself.

What think ye of CHRIST? MATT. xxii. 42.

AND ought we not to put this question to our souls, when our happiness for ever depends upon him, and when without him we are undone to eternity? How ought we then to think of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? Surely as the scripture represents him to be, "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." We ought to think of him in his person, as the great GOD incarnate; in his work and his offices, as the Saviour of Israel: We ought to think of him as one, in whom justice is satisfied, love and righteousness are manifested, and sinners are saved. O what have GOD's people ever thought of CHRIST JESUS! And what do the saints now in heaven think of him? But what think we of CHRIST, when burdened with sin, when oppressed with affliction? When we cannot entertain a good thought of ourselves, can we think of CHRIST as highly as heretofore? Alas! how very weak is our faith at the best? LORD, strengthen our faith, inflame our love, enlarge our views, support us in trials, guide us by thy counsels, and receive us into glory, that we may sing thy praise to all eternity. Amen.

Our conversation, or our citizenship, is in heaven, PHIL. iii. 20. therefore rejoice, because your names are written in heaven, LUKE x. 20. And set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, COL. iii. 2.

A Christian being only a traveller through this world, having as it were a night's lodging in it, does not expect to have every thing so convenient; but since his journey's end and city is in heaven, all his actions, sufferings, prayers, trade, and conversation, turn that away. O LORD, grant that mine eyes may be always fixed upon this mark, so as to regulate all my designs and doings accordingly: asking myself in every thing, whether it be fit for heaven, and agreeable to the mind and manners of the celestial citizens and bridegroom above.

Raise thee, my soul, fly up and run
 Thro' ev'ry heav'ly street;
 And say, There's naught below the sun
 That's worthy of thy feet.
 Thus will we mount on sacred wings,
 And tread the courts above;
 Nor earth, nor all her mightiest things
 Shall tempt our meanest love.

The glorious tenants of the place
 Stand bending round the throne;
 And saints and seraphs sing and praise
 The infinite THREE-ONE.
 JESUS, O when shall that dear day,
 That joyful hour appear,
 When I shall leave this house of clay,
 To dwell amongst them there?

To Him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins, ACTS x. 43. chap. iv. 12. This name is as ointment poured forth, the fulness of all grace, CANT. i. 3. It is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe, PROV. xviii. 10.

IN this name we shall draw nigh to the Father in prayer, and not come before him with a strange fire of our own worthiness or devotion, and he will draw nigh to us again, JAMES iv. 8. He will certainly grant our petitions, "and we shall receive, that our joy may be full," JOHN xvi. 24. "For the **LORD** is good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous "in mercy unto all them that call upon him," PSALM lxxxvi. 5. and all these promises are yea and amen in **CHRIST**; that every one can say, "The " **LORD** will receive my prayer," PSALM vi. 9. "Blessed be **GOD**, who " has not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me; for he has dealt bountifully with me," PSALM lxvi. 20. and xiii. 6.

Lift up your eyes to th' heav'ly seat,
Where your Redeemer stays;
Kind intercessor! there He sits,
And loves, and pleads, and prays.
Petitions now, and praise may rise,
And saints their off'rings bring;

The priest, with his own sacrifice,
Presents them to the king.
JESUS alone shall bear my cries
Up to the Father's throne;
He, dearest **LORD**! perfumes my sighs,
And sweetens ev'ry groan.

In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore, PSALM XVI. 11. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from GOD, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, REV. xxi. 2, 3, 4, 10, 12.

O My dear Saviour! being still so very imperfect and little prepared for heaven, grant that I may be more adorned with faith and love, with a heavenly mind and spiritual desires. And since thou knowest in what I am wanting, and hast justified and cloathed me already with thy own garment and blood, and hast brought so many sons to glory, I trust that thou wilt also inwardly adorn, perfect, and fetch me home in due time.

O, the delights, the hear'ly joys,
The glories of the place
Where JESUS sends the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace!

Archangels found his lofty praise
Thro' ev'ry heav'ly street;
And lay their highest honours down
Submissive at his feet.

LORD, how our souls are all on fire
To see thy bick'd abode;
Our tongues rejoice in tunes of praise
To our incarnate GOD.

And while our faith enjoys this sight,
We long to leave our clay;
And wish thy fiery chariots, LORD,
To fetch our souls away.

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Watch and pray: let us be going, MATT. xxvi. 41, 46. Remember Lot's wife, LUKE xvii. 32. This is the way, walk ye in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left, ISA. xxx. 21.

TO keep free from self-righteousness, and false joy and liberty, is the safest way. O my dear Saviour! thou art my way; I will walk in thy name, I live in faith, I look upon thee, I cleave to thee, I abide in thee; and my constant saying is, I am justified, clean, and free by thee; not to live licentiously, but to be kept from it. For if I was not to rest in thee, I should rest in the flesh; but being taken up with thee, all other things must vanish away, and I am able to be watchful, close and fervent.

When my forgetful soul renewes
The favour of thy grace,
My heart presumes I cannot lose
The relish all my days.
But ere soime fleeting hour is past,
The flatt'ring world employs
Some sensuall bait to seize my taste,
And to pollute my joys.

Then I repent and vex my soul,
That I should leave thee so!
Where will those wild affections roll,
That let a Saviour go?
Shew my forgetful feet the way
That leads to joys on high!
There knowledge grows without decay,
And love shall never die.

Walk before me, as in my presence, and be thou perfect. GEN. xvii. 1. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing whether it be good or whether it be evil, ECCL. xii. 13, 14.

CONSEQUENTLY all such things as are now called indifferent in their nature, will also be arraigned; and not judged indifferent, but either actually good or actually evil. O the prodigious harm that is done by this false doctrine of innocent things! It opens the door to innumerable sins. For though our conscience often tells us, that we should not do such things as are not actually good; yet presently innocence is pleaded, it is called a harmless thing; which, though it could not be said to be good, yet it was not evil neither, but quite indifferent in its nature: by which thousands are drawn into the snares of the devil. O LORD, grant that all my works be done unto thee, and in thy presence, agreeable to thy commandments; that even my leaves may not wither, and whatsoever I do may prosper and abide for ever.

Within thy circling power I stand;
On every side I find thy hand;
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with Gon.

O may these thoughts possess my breast,
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest;
Nor let my weaker passions dare
Consent to sin, for Gon is there.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, JOHN iii. 3.

CONSEQUENTLY no outward form of religion will do; but we must be spiritually born by the Spirit of God, and have our hearts changed, else we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. CHRIST confirmed it twice with an oath. How is it possible then, that mere honest and moral men can be saved? Will CHRIST break his double oath? No surely. Therefore outward gross immoralities being only blamed and rebuked, moral christians always slip through; and the looser sort think that they can leave off their open sins one time or another; and so none is duly concerned to be thoroughly converted; but the new-birth and a real change of the heart being insisted upon, and CHRIST held forth in this only true way, every one, who will be saved, must be turned.

The second Adam shall restore
The ruins of the first;
Hosanna to that sov'reign pow'r
That new-creates our dust.
When from the curse He sets us free,
He makes our natures clean;

Nor would our Saviour come to be
The minister of sin.
His Spirit purifies our frame,
And seals our peace with God;
JESUS and his salvation came
By water and by blood.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God, PSALM xlvi. 2, 5, 6. For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, ROM. viii. 18.

THIS shews, that even believers are still in disquietness, but they conquer it by faith and hope to the end. If the Lord had said that they should strive, pray, and hope, till such and such a time, and his help should fail, then they might despair; but as he fixes no certain time, but without limitation requires them to hope, this keeps them from impatience and despair; should he even tarry to the end, they will certainly experience him then, if no sooner, to be faithful in his promises. O Lord, suffer not the load to lie too long nor too heavy upon me, that I may not be unfaithful: I trust thou wilt in due time prove thyself to be my help, and thy word to be true.

'Tis God that lifts our comforts high,
Or sinks them in the grave;
He gives (and blessed be his name!)
He takes but what he gave.
Peace all our angry passions then;
Let each rebellious sigh

Be silent at his sov'reign will,
And ev'ry murmur die.
If smiling mercy crown our lives,
Its praises shall be spread!
And we'll adore the justice too,
That strikes our comforts dead.

Be not soon shaken in mind, 2 THESS. ii. 2. I determined not to know any thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST and him crucified, 1 COR. ii. 2. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, COL. ii. 3.

O My dear Saviour, grant that I may rest quietly and humbly in thee, avoiding all swerving presumptions and actions, which are not commanded to me. He that always covets novelties, it is a sign that he has not as yet tasted the power of the good word of God; else he would certainly be satisfied with it. Better daily to improve in the power of godliness, than in new words, forms, and methods. "May the Lord quicken me by the old truths, and humble "my heart evermore, so as to receive them better, and to abide in that which I have heard "from the beginning!" Novelty is the bane of souls, by which we are often grievously tormented and distracted. It is work enough for a meek and quiet soul to keep within the bounds of a settled mind, and effectually to center in God. How is it possible for such, as from a vain curiosity desire to know every thing, to enjoy true rest? What have we to do with the world? What need to meddle with the business of others? What signifies all knowledge, if it does not profit our souls? Had we not better to be ignorant of some other things, than to want a saving knowledge of CHRIST?

O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will.

My soul has gone too far astray,
My feet too often slip;
Yet since I've not forgot thy way,
Restore thy wand'ring sheep.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, PSALM li. 2.
 —Divine answer; *The blood of JESUS CHRIST, the Son of GOD, cleanseth us from all sin, 1 JOHN i. 16.*

UNDER the ceremonial law all things are purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there was no remission; thus it is impossible, that any one sin, even the least sinful motion, should be taken away, except by the blood of CHRIST JESUS. This teaches us the heinousness of sin, keeps us humble, tender, and watchful, and yet gives sufficient peace and strength at the same time.

My dying Saviour and my GOD,
 Fountain for guilt and sin,
 Sprinkle me ever with thy blood,
 And cleanse, and keep me clean.

Wash me, and make me thus thy own;
 Wash me, and mine thou art;
 Wash me, but not my feet alone,
 My hands, my head, my heart.

Th' atonement of thy blood apply,
 'Till faith to sight improve;
 'Till hope shall in fruition die,
 And all my soul be love.

For ever here my rest shall be,
 Close to thy bleeding side;
 'Tis all my hope and all my plea,
 " For me the Saviour dy'd."

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, 2 COR. xiii. 5.

BUT is there any need of such self-examination, when yet we preach CHRIST, and stay ourselves on his name? Alas! it is possible both to preach and profess him, to be confident respecting him, as our Rock and Redeemer, whilst still we remain without interest in him, and are yet in the way to everlasting destruction. Thus JESUS hath told us, MATT. vii. 22, 23. Let us examine ourselves; Is our faith in Him accompanied with much self-abhorrence, in the views of our sinfulness and pollution before him? Do we prize him, not only for his favour to us, but for his own goodness, his grace and his excellence? Do we love him, so as we love nothing beside, not self, not the world, not ease or advantage? Then surely we are his, and He also is ours: These graces are the fruits of his Spirit within us; they are proofs of our faith, and of our union with him: and if we are united by the Spirit of JESUS, he will certainly own us before men and angels; he will never forsake us in time or eternity. But how dreadful will their case be, who deceive themselves here, and habitually give themselves unto sin and iniquity, whilst yet they make mention of JESUS CHRIST with their lips? Keep us, LORD, we beseech thee, from such sad delusion! O give us to remember our past provocations; and to know, to love, and to serve thee in sincerity.

*What lack I yet? MATT. xix. 20. Yet lackest thou one thing, LUKE xviii. 22.
For, one thing is needful, LUKE x. 42.*

THIS one thing needful is to have CHRIST; and by being first, with Mary, served and treated by him, we draw the necessary strength from him, to serve him again. He must be first our meat before we can feed on him, or do any thing for him. Faith receives grace first from the fulness of CHRIST; and being thus strengthened, begins to give and work also, though it be but faintly. However, it is not by our working and giving, but by the receiving in faith, that we become christians, and remain in a perfect state of salvation: since we receive, even with the feeble hands of faith, a whole and perfect CHRIST. "This is the one "thing needful."

I'll hear of nothing else beside
My JESU' and him crucify'd,
In him is all I want:
His blood, his meritorious blood,
Alone is rich, alone is good,
For that alone I pant.

Sure none refuse to join this song,
To praise our Saviour all along
Their pilgrimage below;
To sing, "there's none, there's none beside,
" But JESU, and him crucify'd,
" Needful for us to know."

Joseph is a fruitful bough—the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty GOD of Jacob: from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, GEN. xl ix. 22—24.

JOSEPH is acknowledged to have been an eminent type of the Messiah: by bringing some circumstances under one view, the resemblance will appear conspicuous and striking. Joseph was the son of his father's old age; CHRIST the Son of the Ancient of Days. Joseph was in a peculiar manner beloved by his father; CHRIST is the dear Son of his Father's love. Jacob made for Joseph a coat of many colours; GOD prepared a body in human nature for CHRIST, filled and adorned with the various gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure. Joseph was hated by his brethren, and they could not endure to think he should have dominion over them; the Jews, CHRIST's brethren according to the flesh, hated him, and would not have him to reign over them. Joseph was sent by his father a long journey to visit his brethren, and know their welfare; CHRIST was sent from the bosom of the Father, to seek and to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Joseph's brethren conspired to take away his life; the Jews said, "This is the heir, let us kill him;" and they consulted to take away his life. Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver at the motion of Judah; and CHRIST, by one of the same name, was sold for thirty pieces. Joseph being reckoned as dead by his father, and yet alive, may be an emblem of CHRIST's death, and resurrection from the dead.

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for CHRIST ; yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in him, as my righteousness,
PHIL. iii. 7—9.

THIS was the life and constant mind of St. Paul. The word, “In *Him, in CHRIST, in the LORD, I am in CHRIST, &c.*” occur continually. I choose it for my motto also. It shall be my great tower, my strong fortress, my sweet paradise, mine only element and life. Here I will take up my abode for ever: “It is good for us to be here; here “let us make tabernacles.” Here death shall find me at last.

Had I ten thousand gifts beside,
 I'd cleave to JESU crucify'd,
 And build on him alone:
 For no foundation is there giv'n
 On which I'd place my hopes of heav'n,
 But CHRIST the corner-stone.

Possessing CHRIST, I all possess;
 Wisdom, and strength and righteousness,
 And sanctity complete :
 Bold in his name I dare draw nigh
 Before the Ruler of the sky,
 And all his justice meet.

What must I do to be saved?—Divine answer; Believe on the LORD JESUS, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house, ACTS xvi. 31.

FAITH is not a confidence of our own making, but it is GOD that works it in a contrite and repenting heart. This faith purifies the heart, destroys the old Adam, overcomes the world, changes us in heart, mind, and all the powers and faculties of the soul, which is the true Protestant faith; and not that we only think and say, "I believe." By this we must try our faith. All true believers have received it under a sense of holy contrition and sorrow. If we feel something of this, and apply to CHRIST by prayer for faith and grace, we have a sure mark of faith already; for if we did not believe, we would not pray. And he that daily cleanses himself in the blood of CHRIST, has true faith and hope already, though he is but weak, and does not taste any joy.

Ye dying souls that sit
In darkness and distress,
Look from the borders of the pit
To CHRIST's recovering grace.
Sinners shall hear his sound;
Their thankful tongues shall own,

Their righteousness and strength is found
In CHRIST the LORD, alone.

In him shall Israel trust,
And see their guilt forgiv'n;
God will pronounce the sinners just,
And take the saints to heav'n.

Abstain from all appearance of evil, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. PHIL. ii. 15.

LORD, I desire to shine in good works, the genuine fruits of faith: therefore will I give myself up to thee to purge me, that I may bring forth more fruit. Looking upon myself as thine, I would not only abstain from evil, but from the very appearance of it. Some content themselves with being blameless, but I would wish to appear so for the gospel's sake, lest through me offence should come; which, as far as in me lieth, I would prevent. Thy children, O God, are as lights in the world; O, pour thy grace, that heavenly oil, into my lamp, and so trim it that it may give light unto all around, that they may be led to glorify thy holy name.

O Lord! my stubborn will subdue;
Create my ruin'd frame anew;
Dispel my darkness by thy light:
Into all truth my spirit guide,
But from mine eyes for ever hide
All things despising in thy sight.

Be heaven now my soul's abode,
Hid be my life with CHRIST in God,
My spirit, Lord, be one with thine;
Let all my works in thee be wrought,
And fill'd with thee be all my thought,
Till in me thy full likeness shine.

Let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, Rev. xxii. 17.

IF there be a sense of sin, and want of spiritual blessings, and a willingness to be saved by grace, though you know not that it is CHRIST's secret power that makes you willing, yet being athirst and willing, you are invited: do not puzzle and perplex yourself with such questions as these; Am I elected? Have I a right? Am I prepared? But come upon the invitation, and take pardon, peace, righteousness, &c. as free gifts to the needy. If one ready to perish with hunger and thirst, was invited to a feast, and assured of welcome, and he should stand hesitating, Have I a right? Am I worthy? would it not seem preposterous in him thus to demur, when his necessities were pressing upon him, and a plentiful table before him? The weary, the hungry, the thirsty, the guilty, the worthless, the vilest, are invited to believe on JESUS, who came only to save sinners; and hath assured them in his word, that they who thus come to him, "he will in no wise cast out."

The Spirit in the word,
And in his motions cries,
"Come to the fountain head of life,
And come for large supplies.
Let him who feels his thirst,
Nor can endure its rage,
Come to salvation's copious springs,
And all his pains allwage.

And whosoever will,
Is welcome to receive
Streams of everlasting life,
That heav'n will freely give."
JESUS! is this thy voice?
We bless thy gracious call;
And fly with joyful haste to thee,
Our Saviour and our All.

Weep not: behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has prevailed, Rev. v. 5. He rose up triumphantly, and destroyed the works of the devil: therefore sin shall not have dominion over us, Rom. vi. 14.

MANY complain, that though they will not turn back, yet they have no power to advance further. If this is thy case, my reader, remember that the enemy of souls will discourage thee. Go on praying, and venture it evermore upon the LORD. Consider how he awakened you at first, how often he has heard your prayers afterwards, and assisted you in many hard struggles. Surely he will help you now also. If that will not do, begin, as it were, afresh, acknowledge yourself guilty in every respect; and, as the chief of Sinners, plead for mercy, and be instant in your humble supplications; looking at the same time upon yourselves as reconciled and pardoned in CHRIST, in spite of all your misery: then you will soon make a better progress. To despair of our own strength, is good; but we must never despair of the power of CHRIST who is risen from the dead, but be sure to overcome with him at last. He will certainly help you in the due and best season.

Heil and thy sins resist thy course,
But hell and sin are vanquish'd foes;
Thy Jesus nail'd them to the cross,
And sung the triumph when he rose.

He dies, and in that dreadful night
Did all the powers of hell destroy;
Rising, he brought our heav'n to light,
And took possession of the joy.

Whom the LORD loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, GOD dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But he chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness, HEB. xii. 6—10.

TO these chastenings also belong outward afflictions, which are precious means, and sanctified to believers. O my dear heavenly Father! thou art only pleased with a true filial confidence, but I am still of a distrustful heart, when any thing comes upon me on a sudden. Grant that I may always entertain the best hopes of thee, fear no adversity, nor look upon it as a sign of displeasure, but of love; really believing it to be intended as a blessing to my good. Whatever thy providence may order, let me only be convinced of thy paternal affection, and fall in with thy salutary designs.

So for my sin I justly feel
Thy discipline, O God;
Yet wait the gracious moment still,
Till thou remove thy rod.
For I have found 'tis good for me
To bear my Father's rod;

Afflictions make me learn thy law,
And live upon my God.
This is the comfort I enjoy
When new distress begins;
I read thy word, I run thy way,
And hate my former sins.

The entrance of thy word gives light: It giveth understanding to the simple,
 PSALM CXIX. 130. *Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity
 have dominion over me, ver. 33.*

WE may have a clear sight and a real taste of the gospel, and yet be soon deprived of the comfort of it again, if we do not walk in godly simplicity and poverty of spirit, for CHRIST will have none but humble and child-like disciples. But thus abiding always in the word and in CHRIST, we shall come to great and lasting assurance: for neither a sweet sense, nor even faith itself, but CHRIST alone, is the foundation of our salvation, whom the weakest as well as the strongest believer receives, And we must believe first, before we can feel. To trust only on feeling, is not true faith, and does not last long.

Thy mercies fill the earth, O LORD,
 How good thy works appear!
 Open mine eyes to read thy word,
 And see thy wonders there.

When once it enters to the mind,
 It spreads such light abroad,
 The meanest souls instruction find,
 And raise their thoughts to GOD.

'Tis like the sun, a heav'ly light,
 That guides us all the day;
 And through the dangers of the night,
 A lamp to lead our way.

Since I'm a stranger here below,
 Let not thy paths be hid,
 But mark the road my feet should go,
 And be my constant guide.

Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way,

PSALM CXIX. 37.

IF you was to see a man dully endeavouring all his life to satisfy his thirst, by holding up one and the same empty cup to his mouth, you would certainly despise his ignorance; but if you should see others of brighter parts, and finer understandings, ridiculing the dull satisfaction of one cup, and thinking to satisfy their own thirst by a variety of gilt and golden empty cups, would you think that these were ever the wiser, or happier, or better employed, for their finer parts? Now this is all the difference that you can see in the happiness of this life. The dull and heavy soul may be content with one empty appearance of happiness, and be continually trying to hold one and the same empty cup to his mouth all his life. But then let the wit, the great scholar, the fine genious, the great statesman, the polite gentleman, lay all their heads together, and they can only shew you more, and various, empty appearances of happiness; give them all the world into their hands, let them cut and carve as they please, they can only make a greater variety of empty cups; for search as deep, and look as far as you will, there is nothing here to be found that is nobler or greater than high eating and drinking; than rich dress and human applause; unless you look for it in the wisdom and laws of religion. Reader, if you will reflect upon the vanity of all orders of life without piety, and see how all the ways of the world are only so many different ways of error, blindness, and mistake, you would soon turn from the creature, and seek for happiness in the Creator.

Give ear to my prayer, O GOD, and hide not thyself from my supplication, PSALM lv. 1.—CHRIST's answer ; Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you, JOHN xvi. 23. For the Father himself loveth you, ver. 27. He has promised : Before they call, I will answer ; and whilst they are speaking, I will hear, ISA. lxv. 24. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire when ye pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. MARK xi. 24.

HE that converses much, and is humbly confident with GOD in prayer, shall certainly be heard : and these answers of prayer are undeniable evidences of the truth, faithfulness of the love of GOD, and greatly strengthen his faith ; and at last bring him to be intimately acquainted with him. The more we receive, the more we are enlightened to see how much there is still wanting. This stirs us up to more frequent prayer, and to desire evermore ; and the more we desire, and believe that we shall receive it, the more shall be granted. Unbelief receives nothing, MATT. xiii. 58. but faith opens all the treasures of GOD, and never goes away empty.

Because on me they set their love,
I'll save them, saith the LORD ;
I'll bear their joyful souls above
Destruction and the sword.

My grace shall answer when they call ;
In trouble I'll be nigh ;
My pow'r shall help them when they fall,
And raise them when they die.

If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of CHRIST, GAL. i. 10. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification, ROM. xv. 2. Fear or love of men, and hypocrisy, very often are nearly allied: A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet, PROV. xxix. 5. But he that rebukes a man afterwards, shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue, chap. xxviii. 23.

We are ever inclined to extremes, even then when God has begun his work in our soul. At one time we are apt to run into a false activity for the conversion of others, trusting too much on our own sufficiency and strength; at other times perhaps, we fall into too much remissness and inactivity for the salvation of others. May the LORD therefore always guide me to steer the middle course, so as to walk in all singleness and humility of heart, as well as in true fervency of spirit, faith, and love; that it may be said, "I believe, therefore do I speak." Grant, O my dear Saviour, that I may shine as a light, and be useful to all about me; never seeking MY OWN, but only the salvation and good of others, with unfeigned love. O that thy love may constrain me in all things! Amen.

My own glory still I seek,
Still I covet human praise;
Still in all I do, or speak,
Thee I wrong, and rob thy grace.
And must that which is so good
Evil prove to sinful me?

Poison shall I draw from food,
Sin from grace, and pride from thee?
O forbid it, humble love!
Hide me, O my Father, hide;
Far away this snare remove,
Save me from the sin of pride.

Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him,
1 JOHN iii. 19.

THE evidence of our assurance of eternal happiness, is that which every soul, that makes any serious reflections in matters of religion, pants after; it is therefore necessary to know upon what foundation this blessed evidence is built, and from what principles it arises; and those, I think, are chiefly faith, love, and obedience; since no man can have this, that does not feel in himself the principle of obedience; nor can he have obedience without the principle of love, nor love without the principle of faith: for it is a notorious contradiction to imagine, that any one can be assured of God Almighty's pardon, without obeying him; of his favour, without loving him; or of the eternal enjoyment of him, without a firm and steadfast belief in him. But here many mistake the nature of these things; true belief in God represents him to the mind infinite in glory, in power, in wisdom, in goodness, and in all perfections, with such charms, such beauty, such loveliness, as to captivate and ravish the affections of the soul, and smite it with a divine love: true love reigns triumphant in the soul, engrosses all its affections, divests other objects of their charms, nay, makes them appear vile and contemptible in comparison with the supreme good: true obedience strives to please God, to resemble him, to render itself acceptable to him, and ardently desires the enjoyment of him.

*He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved, MATT. xxiv. 13.
Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown, REV. iii. 11. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall, 1 COR. x. 12.*

HE that stands in faith, and by nature is of a cheerful temper, must not magnify the measure of his own faith, and undervalue that of weaker souls, for fear of falling away. He who knows the nature and power of temptations, will not discourage the weak, nor insist too much upon particular enjoyments and sensible assurance, which are not the constant witness and marks of faith. The holy Spirit himself is the earnest and seal of adoption; who is to be known, not only by this joy, but by all his other fruits and operations. To trust too much upon feeling, disturbs our peace as soon as it is gone; but to rely on the word of God, preserves a settled assurance.

Jesus, shall I never be
Firmly grounded upon thee?
Strong in faith I seem this hour,
Stript the next of all my pow'r.
Plant, and root, and fix in me
All the mind that was in thee;

Settled peace I then shall find,
When I am renew'd in mind.
Grant that ev'ry moment I
May believe and feel thee nigh,
Stedfastly behold thy face,
'Stablish'd with abiding grace.

If any man have not the spirit of CHRIST, (but the spirit of this world) he is none of his, ROM. viii. 9. See also ver. 7, 8, 14.

FOR not only gross wickedness, but even a carnal mind, and “the friendship of this world, is enmity against God,” PHIL. iii. 18, 19. JAMES iv. 4. But how do I know that I have the Spirit of CHRIST? Answer, I have prayed for him earnestly; this cannot be in vain, LUKE xi. 13. He works also hatred and sorrow of sin, rebukes, comforts, and drives me to CHRIST, and to prayer. This is his abiding witness, built upon the word of God, which no man of this world, but even the weakest believer, can have.

Holy, and true, and righteous LORD,
I wait to prove thy perfect will;
Be mindful of thy gracious word,
And stamp me with thy Spirit's seal.
The hatred of the carnal mind
Out of my flesh at once remove;
Give me a tender heart, resign'd,
And pure, and full of faith and love.

Within me thy good Spirit place;
Spirit of health, and love, and pow'r;
Plant in me thy victorious grace,
And sin shall never enter more.
Purge me from ev'ry sinful blot,
My idols all be cast aside;
Cleanse me from ev'ry evil thought,
From all the filth of self and pride.

Whosoever bath to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly, MATT. xii. 12. For, the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life, JOHN iv. 14.

Of the remarkable increase of the kingdom of GOD, even from the least beginning, see also MATT. xiii. 31—33. and that beautiful figure, EZEK. xlvii. 1—12. This well therefore being once opened to you, it is highly necessary to draw evermore the living water out of it by prayer, since it runs freely then. But if you begin to be slothful and distracted, not abiding closely in CHRIST, by true watchfulness, as in the presence of GOD, your spirit will be soon dried up; that afterwards you will hardly be able with the most anxious groans to draw as it were one single drop out of the deep of this fountain. O LORD! grant that I may uninterruptedly remain in thee and in thy presence, and always live in thy communion, as the fish in the water.

Glory to God that walks the sky,
And sends his blessing thro';
That tells his saints of joys on high,
And gives a taste below.
Clearful I feast on heav'ly fruit,
And drink the pleasures down,
Pleasures that flow hard by the foot
Of the eternal throne.

But ah! how soon my joys decay,
How soon my sins arise,
And snatch the heav'ly scene away
From these lamenting eyes!
When shall the time, dear JESUS, when
The shining day appear,
That I shall leave these clouds of sin,
And guilt, and darkness here?

Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, MATT. xxv. 30.

LOOK at this man, to whom his lord had given one talent: he could not bear the thoughts of using his talent according to the will of him from whom he had it, and therefore he chose to make himself happier in a way of his own. "Lord, said he, I knew thee, that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hadst not sown, and gathering where thou hadst not sown," &c. His lord having convicted him out of his own mouth, dispatched him with this sentence, "Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness," &c. Here you see how happy this man made himself, by not acting wholly according to his lord's will. It was according to his own account, a happiness of murmuring and discontent; "I knew thee, says he, that thou wast a hard man;" it was a happiness of fears and apprehensions; "I was, says he, afraid;" it was a happiness of vain labours and fruitless travels; "I went, said he, and hid thy talent;" and after having been awhile the sport of foolish passions, tormenting fears, and fruitless labours, he is rewarded with darkness, eternal weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Look at the man with his five talents, "Lord, thou gavest me five talents, behold I have gained besides them, five talents more," &c. Here you see a man wholly intent on improving his talents; he has no uneasy passions, murmurings, vain fears and fruitless labours, like the other, but his work prospers in his hand, his happiness increases upon him, the blessing of five becomes the blessing of ten talents; and he is received with a "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Through (vain) desire a man having seperated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom, PROV. xviii. 1. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c. GAL. v. 22, 23.

BAWLING, judging, and reviling does not become a christian. The LORD was not in the strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in "a still small voice," 1 KINGS xix. 11, 12. He that takes offence at every thing, is still blind; and who can bear nothing, is but very weak. Such should remember that it is said, "Destroy it not," &c. Isa. lxv. 8. Not only the grosser sort of divisions, but also such well-meaning particular seperations and alterations, as are imprudently made at improper times and places, do a great deal of harm, and disturb the general harmony and mutual confidence of christian brethren. For some religious exercises are good in themselves, but brotherly love and harmony is better still. The true Spirit of GOD is no sectarian, makes no divisions, is far from boasting, and uses no arts or cunning tricks. Thus you may try the spirits.

Lo! what an entertaining sight
Are brethren that agree,
Brethren, whose cheerful hearts unite
In bands of piety!

When streams of love from Christ the spring
Descend to ev'ry soul,
And heav'ly peace with balmy wing,
Shades and bedews the whole.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another,
JOHN xiii. 35.

“**G**OD is love, and every one that loveth is born of **GOD** ;” if we love one another as disciples and brethren of **CHRIST**, all saints are saints, not as of this or that party; and love not in word, but in deed and in truth; and shew our love sincerely and heartily by all proper means, in the work and labour of love, this is to ourselves, and to all men, a proper, solid proof of discipleship; a clear testimony that we have truly learned **CHRIST**, have his Spirit and his Love shed abroad in our hearts; that we are of the family and household of faith, and shall enjoy all the family privileges. This is a better evidence, and more convincing to all around us what we are, than all knowledge, gifts, attainments, and outward privileges whatever. O **God** of love, cause me to love thee, and all thine, the poor, the weak, and the feeble, as well as the strong; for all are thine.

Let party-names no more
The Christian world o’erspread;
Gentile and Jew, and bond and free,
Are one in **CHRIST** their Head,
Among the saints on earth
Let mutual love be found;
Heirs of the same inheritance,
With mutual blessings crown’d.

Let envy and ill-will
Be banish’d far away;
Those should in strictest friendship dwell,
Who the same **LORD** obey.
Then will the Church below
Resemble that above;
Where streams of pleasure overflow,
And ev’ry heart is love.

Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your LORD doth come,
MATT. xxiv. 42.

TO watch, is the wise exercise of a gracious soul, who is sensible of his own weakness, loves his Saviour, and fears to grieve his Spirit; who is well acquainted with the depth of corruption in his fallen nature; sees with mental eyes the invisible powers of darkness, and hearkens to the voice of his benevolent, watchful, adorable Shepherd. It implies a thorough awakened attention of the mind to its spiritual concerns; has the love of JESUS for his motive, and is attended with a fiducial dependence on CHRIST the LORD for protection from, and strength against all his enemies, together with supplies of grace in every time of need.—If our religion be only in outward profession, it may pass without watching; but if it is true grace in the heart from JESUS CHRIST, that sacred treasure will need to be guarded by circumspect watchfulness.—The exhortation is to all GOD's children, necessary in every condition, in every stage of a christian's life: in youth, manhood; old age; in prosperity and adversity; in the seasons of consolation, and in the times of temptation; in company, and alone.

O blessed JSEUS, help me to watch and pray; let me be always ready; keep me in thy love, and preserve me by thy power; till my change shall come.

As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O Gon.

My soul thirsteth after GOD, for the living GOD, PSALM xlvi. 2, 3. Divine answer; Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that has no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness, ISA. lv. 1, 2.

THERE is a great difference between a legal and a faint-hearted soul; the former is puffed up with self-righteousness; the latter humbly thirsts after CHRIST's righteousness; therefore he is not under the law, but has grace already. It is only the child, or the new man actually born, that can cry and thirst. And though he cannot so fully believe it, yet to have grace, is one thing, and to feel and enjoy it, is another. Therefore let not the weak be confounded, whis is done very easily, the enemy himself contributing to it, as much as he can; but let it be declared; even to the weakest, that they are actually saved, as soon as they are earnestly panting and willing to receive all without price, MATT. v. 3.

Eternal wisdom has prepar'd
A soul-reviving feast,
And bids our longing appetites
The rich provisions taste.
JESUS, the Gon, invites us here
To this triumphal feast,

And brings immortal blessings down
For each redeemed guest.
O! glorious Gon; what can we pay
For favours so divine?
We would devote our hearts alway,
To be for ever thine.

How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? PSALM xiii. 2.—God's answer; Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto GOD, PHIL. iv. 6. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved, PSALM lv. 22. For he has done wonderful things; his counsels of old are as faithfulness and truth, ISAI. xxv. 1, 9.

“ **B**E careful for nothing,” is a wall against a thousand troubles. But if we give room to any care and unbelief, it is like a leaven that spreads through all our actions. Therefore we ought never to despair in our lawful calling, but rely in all things on the good providence and faithfulness of God; firmly believing that he will never fail to carry us through the most difficult and intricate circumstances, though there should be ever so little appearance for it in our own eyes.

He that can dash whole worlds to death,
And make them when he please,
He speaks, and that almighty breath,
Fulfils his great decrees.

His very word of grace is strong
As that which built the skies;

The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.

He said, “ Let the wide heav'n be spread; ”
And heav'n was stretch'd abroad;
“ Abram, I'll be thy God,” he said
And he was Abram's God.

— *It is done, Rev. xxi. 9.*

WHEN Jesus bowed the head, and gave up the ghost, he said, *It is finished.* The arduous and important work of obedience and suffering, which I had undertaken in my mediatorial capacity, is finished.—I have glorified my Father on earth; I have finished the work he gave me to do.

When all the redeemed are gathered, he who sitteth on the throne, beholding those he had purchased by his blood, and brought to glory, rejoicing in these works of his hands, thus expresseth himself, *It is done.* The means and helps appointed for training you up, and preparing you for glory, are now superseded, being no longer necessary: the scaffolding is now taken down, when the grand and glorious edifice in all its parts is finished. That “which is perfect is come, and that which was in part is done away.” What depth of wisdom, what beautiful disposition in the arrangement of the various preparatory parts of the plan, agreeable to the eternal counsel of peace, and in the tendency of every one of them to perfect the glorious work of redeeming love! How harmoniously connected all the links of the golden chain! ROM. viii.

29, 30.

“This is the doing of the LORD, and is it not marvellous in my eye?” When receiving the Spirit that is of God, I see the things that are freely given of God, do I not see and admire my dear IMMANUEL in the whole of the plan; in him the beginning and consummation of this grand design? Am I a part of the plan? Is not his eye upon me, his hand about me? O amazing wisdom and love! shall no part be neglected, can nothing fail in the Redeemer’s hand, shall even the weakest be supported, shall none be lost; shall all his have eternal life? Why then should I fear? The mighty One will do all his works in me and for me. Is the prospect by faith of this finished work pleasant and transporting, what must the immediate beatific vision be! O my God, I will live in hopes of one day joining with all the redeemed in the song of Moses and the Lamb: keep me by thy power to everlasting salvation. Amen.

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*We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God, ACTS xiv. 22.
Therefore, let us run with patience the race that is set before us, HEB. xii. 1.
Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin, ver. 4.*

HOW is it possible for any man to deny the strivings against sin? For (1.) here we are plainly told. (2.) What is spoke of the conflicts between the flesh and the spirit. GAL. v. 17. is the very same. (3.) The most experienced christians are witnesses to it. (4.) The word of God is said to be a sword, our prayers a wrestling, and our faith the victory. Thus our whole race consists in strivings and conquests. There is always an enemy to be conquered first, before we can make a considerable progress in something that is good: and none of our enemies is very easily to be overcome, but some are very stubborn. Therefore courage and patience are required: and thus we may be sure to have the victory at last.

Subdue thy passions, O my soul,
Maintain the fight, thy work pursue;
Daily thy rising sins control, in I. 1. 1. 1.
And be thy victories ever new. 2. 1. 2. 2.

The land of triumph lies on high,
There are no fields of battle there. 1. 1. 1. 1.

Lord, I would conquer till I die,
And finish all the glorious war.

Let ev'ry flying hour confess,
I gain thy gospel fresh renown;
And when my life and labours cease,
May I possess the promis'd crown.

We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in JESUS CHRIST: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, ROM. iii. 24, 25.

HOW sweet are the words, "by grace, without merit, ye are saved!" O an inexhaustible fountain of all comfort and divine strength! O how little are the generality of vain and worldly people, who still feed upon husks, acquainted with these words! How little are they relished by our self-righteous moral christians: But, O! how deliciously does a poor hungering sinner fare upon them! there is hardly any thing less known and understood, as to the power and experience, than the mystery of CHRIST's suffering and dying for us, and justification by faith in him; though it is the only paradise and element of believers, and the greatest jewel restored by the reformation. Such talking and representations as strike the imagination, are not sufficient; but we must also feel the mortal wounds of sin, by which the flesh is mortified, and be actually healed by the stripes of CHRIST.

God, the great God, that rules the skies,
The gracious and the just,
Makes his own Son a sacrifice,
And here lies all our trust.

Here rest, my faith, and never remove,
Here let repentance rise,

While I behold his bleeding love,
His dying agonies.

With shame and sorrow here I own
How great my guilt has been:
This is my way t' approach the throne,
And God forgives my sin.

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ii. 1, 2

See that ye fall not out by the way. GEN. xiv. 24.

JOSEPH having shewn himself fully reconciled to his brethren, dismisses them with this needful caution, " See that ye fall not out by the way ; " he knew they were but too apt to be quarrelsome ; one might say, " It was you that first upbraided him with his dreams ; " another, " It was you that said, " Let us kill him ; " another, " It was you that stripped him of his coat ; " another, " It was you that threw him into the pit ; " another, " It was you that sold him to the Ishmaelites," &c. Thus their journey to their father's house would be very uncomfortable, if this spirit of quarreling and upbraiding once got possession of them.

Fellow-Christians, what a lesson is here for us ! what says our Lord Jesus to us ? Love one another, live in peace ; whatever occurs " let us not fall out by the way. Are we not all brethren ? Have we not all one Father ? Are we not all subjects of free and sovereign grace ? Are we not agreed in essential points ? Are we not all sinners by nature and practice ? Have we not all one object of faith ? Are we not all travelling the same road ? O then why should we fall out by the way ! Suppose we be of different denominations, yet holding the same head, why cannot we love as brethren ? (the best and most enlightened of all " see but in part ; through a glass darkly," what a powerful reason is here for mutual forbearance ?) Let not the strong despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong. Suppose our way should part a little as to external, yet all setting out from the same spiritual Egypt, all under the same leader, why may we not all hope to meet at last in the true Canaan ? Have we not open and secret enemies now, but we must quarrel one with another ? Satan, false professors, and the ungodly world, are unanimous in their opposition to us, let us be united, that they prevail not against us, PHILIP.

ii. 1, 2.

Where shall I find rest?—Answer; Thus saith the LORD, stand ye in the ways and see; and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and you shall find rest for your soul, JER. vi. 16. See also MATT. xi. 28, 29.

IN our own ways there is nothing but trouble; but giving ourselves entirely up to be guided of God at his own pleasure, we can always be easy, since we know, that by every step he brings us nearer to heaven. The only way to rest, is the way of repentance and faith; in which we look always upon ourselves from the beginning to the end; not only as utterly lost and condemned, but also as perfectly reconciled and justified malefactors in CHRIST. Thus to abide in him, to let him work alone, and be truly resigned to his ways, will certainly have the desired effect; whilst, by the righteousness and workings of our own heart, we can never attain to it, or which is worse, may be lulled into a false rest.

Lord, I believe a rest remains
To all thy people known;
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art lov'd alone.
A rest, where all our souls desire
Is fixt on things above,

Where grief, and pain, and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect love.
O that I now this rest may know,
Believe, and enter in!
Now, Saviour, now the pow'r bestow,
And let me cease from sin.

Ye are complete in him, Col. ii. 10.

THINK, O believer, with wonder and amazement, reflect with gratitude and love, that, whilst thou art deplored thy participation in the common ruin of the human nature, and mourning its sad effects within thy soul, thou mayest yet look through all thine imperfection, frailty, and unworthiness, to thy glorious Representative, and see thyself complete in him. The law which would condemn thee, he has completely satisfied;—the obedience which it requires, in order to thine acceptance with God, he hath completely paid; and that eternal life, from which thy sinful imperfections must have for ever barred thee, is now become thine unalienable inheritance, as the reward of his righteousness, who lived and died for thee. Go forth then, and glorify him in heart and life; the more thou believest in him, the more wilt thou love him; and the more thou lovest him, the better wilt thou serve him; until he shall remove thee from this vale of sin and sorrow, let this be thy song in the house of thy pilgrimage.

To all my vileness, CHRIST is glory bright;
To all my mis'ries infinite delight;
To all my ign'rance w'ise without compare;
To my deformity, th' eternal fair;

Sight to my blindness, to my meaneness wealth;
Life to my death, and to my sickness health;
To darkness right, my liberty in thrall,
What shall I say—my CHRIST is all in all.

Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? Job xiii. 7. Thy word is truth, John xvii. 17.

WHEN Moses saw an Egyptian and an Israelite striving together, he killed the Egyptian, and saved the Israelite, EXOD. ii. 12. But when he saw two Israelites striving together, he laboured to reconcile them, saying, "Ye are brethren, why do ye strive?" So when we read, or see the Apocryphal Books, or Heathen Story, or Popish Traditions, contradicting the Scriptures; as for instance, Jacob curseth the wrath and anger of Simeon and Levi, for murdering the Shechemites, GEN. xlix. 7. And Judith blessed God for killing of them, JUDITH 9. Here, and in such like places, let us kill the Egyptian, but save the Israelite; set a value on the Scriptures, but slight the Apocrypha. But when we meet with any appearance of seeming contradiction in the canon of Scripture; as where it is said, "God tempted Abraham," GENESIS xxii. 1. and "God tempteth no man," JAMES i. 13. Here now, and in many other places, we must be reconcilers, and distinguish between a temptation of trial, which is from God, and a temptation of seducement, which is by the devil; and these two seeming different friends will appear to be brethren, and agree well.

And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an inheritance, JOSHUA xiv. 13.

THE spies that went up to view the promised land, all, except Caleb and Joshua, made a formidable report of the gigantic inhabitants of Hebron, saying, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." "Caleb, (answering well to his name, which signifies *All heart*)" "stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and "possess it, for we are well able to overcome." We are told he had another spirit with him, and followed God fully. Moses therefore, because he wholly followed the Lord his God, was commissionned to make him a grant of all the land whereon his feet had troden, which was the mountain of Hebron. Caleb was eighty-five years old when he reminded Joshua of this promise; he was forty when Moses sent him to spy out the land; thirty-eight years the Lord had kept him in the wilderness, through the plagues of the desert, and seven years in Canaan, through the perils of war; the city Hebron was already reduced, but the inhabitants had repaired to the fastnesses of the mountain, these he wanted to dispossess, assuring Joshua, he had now the same strength of body and holy confidence in God to engage in this dangerous enterprise, as he had at forty years of age, when he was sent as a spy. Joshua blessed him, acknowledged his claim and deserts, besought God to prosper him in his undertaking, and gave him the country; thus was his fidelity and uprightness rewarded.

Reader, are you like-hearted with Caleb? Are you longing after Hebron, that is, communion with God? Are you eager to fight against your spiritual foes, those sons of Anak, lusts, passions, devil, and the world? If so, remember the promise, "As your day is, so shall your strength be found;" keep up fellowship with God, and no enemy shall be too strong for you; beware of judging of enemies (by an eye of sense) like the spies, lean not to your own understanding, but follow God fully; eye the Captain of your salvation, fight in his name and strength, and you shall conquer every foe.

And it came to pass, that at midnight the L ORD smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon, EXOD. xii. 29.

THE death of every first-born of the Egyptians, carried so lively a resemblance, and bore so natural a relation to their sin in destroying every male of the Israelites, that they must needs perceive it was inflicted as a punishment for that very cruelty; and consequently must conclude, that the God of Israel took particular cognizance of human transactions, and, sooner or later, rewarded every man according to his works. The gradual increase of the judgments inflicted on Egypt, is somewhat remarkable, and equally expressive of the mercy and justice of God. The four first plagues were loathsome, rather than fatal to the Egyptians; but after that of the flies came the murrain, which chiefly spent its rage upon the cattle; the biles and blaines reached both man and beast, though there was still a reserve for life: the hail and locusts extended, in a great measure, even to life itself: the first by an immediate stroke, and both consequently by destroying the fruits of the earth. That of darkness added consternation to their minds, and lashes to their consciences; and when all this would not reclaim, at length came the decisive blow; first the execision of the first-born, and then the drowning of the incorrigible tyrant, and all his host. "Great and marvellous are thy works, O L ORD God Almighty! just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

*Draw me, we will run after thee, SOLOMON's Song i. 4.—Divine answer ;
I have loved thee with an everlasting love : therefore with loving-kindness
have I drawn thee, JER. xxxi. 3.*

MANY and various are the ways the Almighty takes in bringing his children to himself, and to a knowledge of the things of their peace ; sometimes he draws by the silken bands of love ; sometimes by the still small voice of his Spirit ; sometimes by the cords of pain and sickness ; sometimes he drives them by the storm and tempest of his broken law ; but most effectually in giving his Son to die for them ? Reader, pray always to him to make you sensible of the secret tender drawing of his love, and willing to follow them directly. This praying always is very needful, because we are always in want, and without being instant and earnest we cannot receive much. Therefore it is not a hard command, but a great benefit and privilege ; as if God should say, “ You are a poor child, always wanting something, but you may always pray to me, and I will always hear, and assist, and draw thee after me.”

O draw me, Saviour, after thee ;
So shall I run and never tire ;
With gracious words still comfort me ;
Be thou my hope, my sole desire :
Free me from ev'ry weight ; nor fear,
Nor sin can come if thou art here.

O that I as a little child,
May follow thee, nor ever rest,
Till sweetly thou hast pour'd thy milk
And lowly mind into my breast,
Nor ever may we parted be
Till I become one spirit with thee.

Those that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed, 1 SAM. ii. 30.

THIS is part of the prophet's message to Eli, when he honoured his sons above God; he had indeed reprobated them, saying, "Why do ye these things? for I hear of your evil doings by all the people." But he did not exert his authority in punishing them as they deserved, when they slighted his reproof. This was accounted by God as conniving at their sin. He therefore acquaints him, that Hophni and Phineas, as they had sinned together, should die together, and his posterity be cut off in the flower of their age, and from the high priesthood. Eli was not much affected with this prophecy, till the threatening was repeated by Samuel, an artless child, who did not know the voice of the Lord till Eli instructed him. It appeared then much more terrible than from the mouth of the prophet; and led him humbly to acknowledge the justice of God, and to submit to the sentence with a truly penitent heart. This is written for our admonition. Are we valiant for the truth, regarding neither father or mother, or the most tender relation, where the interest and honour of our God is concerned? Parents, let this be a warning to you to train up your children in the fear of the Lord.

The Lord JEHOVAH calls,
Be ev'ry ear inclin'd;
May such a voice awake each heart,
And captivate each mind.

O harden not your hearts,
But hear his voice to-day;
Left ere to-morrow's earliest dawn
He calls your souls away.

O C T O B E R 28.

301

Abraham against hope believed in hope, ROM. iv. 21.

O My soul, thou having not like Abraham only one single, but many thousand promises and patterns of faithful believers before thee, it is fit that thou shouldest strongly rely on the word in faith. And though the LORD delayeth his help, and the evil seemeth to grow worse and worse, be not weak, but rather strong, and rejoice; since the most glorious promises of GOD are generally fulfilled in such a wondrous manner, that he sleeps forth to save us at a time when there is the least appearance of it, nay, the contrary follows; for in the greatest extremities GOD is nearest with his help. And this method he chooses, that we may not trust upon any thing that we see or feel, as we are always apt to do, but only upon his bare word, which we can and must depend upon in every state.

How large the promise! how divine,
To Abrah'm and his seed!
"I'll be a GOD to thee and thine,
Supplying all their need."
The words of this extensive love
From age to age endure;

The Angel of the cov'nant proves,
And seals the blessing sure.
Our GOD, how faithful are his ways,
His love endures the same;
Nor from the promise of his grace
Blots out the sinner's name.

Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, GAL. i. 16. For the king's commandment was urgent; much more the commandment of the King of kings, DAN. iii. 22. Therefore, be not slothful in business, ROM. xii. 11.

THE speediest and easiest method to accomplish our desire of overcoming the evil and doing the good, is an immediate compliance with our first convictions, without conferring with flesh and blood. If we delay the work, we give room to other people without, and to Satan, and to our sinful hearts from within, to persuade us to the contrary; by which the flesh can easily renew its strength, and the spirit will be weakened. And what will be the consequence of this? but, that either we miscarry in our design, or that the conflict will be afterwards so much sharper; and the good work, if not stifled, dropt entirely; yet it will not be done so completely, and with such singleness of heart, as it should be. But if we always narrowly watch our hearts, and are faithful, engaging directly even with the least opposition, then our enemies will not be so strong, and we shall have no reason to despair.

Jesus, mighty to renew,
Work in me to will and do;
Turn my nature's rapid tide.
Stem the torrent of my pride.

Take away my darling sin,
Make me willing to be clean;
Make me willing to receive
What thy goodness waits to give.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto GOD, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness unto GOD, ROM. vi. 13.

IF GOD has my members as weapons and instruments in his hands, I shall certainly be able not only to work, but also to conquer, since he understands full well how to manage them. May the LORD only give me grace not to wind myself out of his hands, else I must needs be like a dead, useleſs carcass. For how can a pen write alone, without being in the hand of a writer? It is true indeed, i* at it is very hard, nay impossible, to be really good, and do all that is good, if we undertake it alone; but GOD himself living and working in us, and we truly delighting in him, it is very easy and pleasant. Therefore care is only to be taken, that our hearts may be always the working-place, and our members the instruments of GOD, in which and through which he can perform every thing himself.

Now GOD I serve, to him alone
My thankful homage pay;

My only master CHRIST, I own,
And him will I obey.

To him my members I present,
Which he will not refuse;

The meanest, basest instrument,
His glory deigns to use.

Servant of sin, too long I was,
But CHRIST has set me free;
Glory to his victorious grace,
Which freely ransom'd me.

The fear of man bringeth a snare.—Be not conformed to this world.—If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, PROV. xxix. 25. ROM. xii. 2. 1 JOHN ii. 15.

HOW many people swell with pride and vanity, for such things as they would not know how to value at all, but that they are admired in the world? How fearful are many of having their houses poorly furnished, or themselves meanly cloathed, for this only reason, lest the world should make no account of them, and place them amongst low and mean people? How often would a man have yielded to the haughtiness and ill nature of others, and shewn a submissive temper, but that he dares not pass for such a poor-spirited man in the opinion of the world? Many a man would often drop a resentment, and forgive an affront, but that he is afraid, if he should, the world would not forgive him. How many wish to be real christians, and would practise christian temperance and sobriety in its utmost perfection, were it not for the censure which the world passes upon such a life? Others have frequent intentions of living up to the rules of the christian religion, which they are frightened from, by considering what the world would say of them. Thus does the impression which we have received from living in the world, enslave our minds, that we dare not attempt to be eminent in the sight of God and holy angels, for fear of being little in the eyes of the world. Reader, how is it with thee?—Art thou still hanging between God and the world? Consider for a moment, what can the world give thee in exchange for the favour of God? What can it help thee in sickness, death, and judgment? Make one serious reflection, and the snares of the world will be broken at once.

*At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, DAN. ix. 23.
Continuing instant in prayer, ROM. xii. 12.*

AS soon as we begin to pray earnestly, the LORD hears and signs our petitions to help and bless us: for every supplication is the pronouncing and sealing of a blessing. It is true we don't always observe it immediately; but in due time we shall certainly receive even a visible help. Therefore let us only go on, and put, as it were, one weight of prayers upon another upon the scales of the sanctuary: surely our greatest distress will at last be overbalanced, and salvation brought down. But it is well to be observed, that we must also be watchful, and not act contrary to the intent of our prayers, which might provoke the LORD to disannul the signing of his FIAT (Grant) again, or at least to delay his help. But when he tarries long, it is not his intention to give us a denial, but rather make us more desirous and earnest that he may bestow so much upon us afterwards: for this delay he will certainly well recompence, and grant us abundantly above all that we could ask or think.

LORD, I will not let thee go,
Till the blessing thou bestow:
Hear my Advocate divine;
Lo! to his my suit I join:
Join'd to his, it cannot fail,
Bless me, for I will prevail.

X

Friend of sinners, King of saints,
Answer my minutest wants,
All my largest thoughts require;
Grant me all my heart's desire;
Give me till my cup run o'er,
All, and infinitely more.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise: she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat, GEN. iii. 6. Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin, &c. JAMES i. 14, 15.

THUS one sin always beget another. By the eyes it rushes into the heart; from the heart it proceeds into the mouth, hands, and feet; from us it is transferred upon others, and thus we go on sinning and falling deeper and deeper. Therefore we must set a strict guard over our eyes and ears; be very cautious, and resist the least beginnings of sin, not making light of any: for the least spark of worldly lust being entertained and cherished, we eat of THE FORBIDDEN TREE standing every where before us; and thereby a great fire may be kindled. But having always our eyes fixed in all our conversation upon the presence of GOD in CHRIST, so as to walk continually in the light, and directly to quell the least inward motion of evil; they will never break forth into gross outward sins, but we shall daily grow in grace. May the LORD enable me to practise this good lesson, and watch himself continually over my heart, eyes, lips, and all other senses and thoughts.

With my whole heart I seek thy face,
O let me never stray
From thy commands, O God of grace,
Nor tread the sinner's way.

Thy word I hide within my heart
To keep my conscience clean,
And be an everlasting guard
From every rising sin.

The preaching of the cross is to us, which are saved, the power of God,
 1 COR. i. 18.

O That I might always feed upon, and experience its power, till I have obtained a complete victory. Whosoever was bit by the fiery serpent, looking upon the brazen serpent, lived, NUMB. xxi. 9. Thus always to look upon CHRIST crucified, is the one thing needful, from which all other blessings flow, JOHN iii. 14, 15. O LORD, grant that the eyes of my faith may be immovably fixed upon thee; upon the cross, so as to be entirely healed at last: for as long as I live, I feel the biting of the old serpent, therefore must I also look upon thee continually.

So did the Hebrew prophet raise
 The brazen serpent high;
 The wounded felt immediate ease,
 The camp forsook to die.

Look upward in the dying hour,
 And live, the prophet cries;
 But CHRIST performs a nobler cure
 When faith lifts up her eyes.

High on the cross the Saviour hung,
 High in the heav'ns he reigns:
 Here sinners, by th' old serpent stung,
 Look, and forget their pains.

When GOD's own Son is lifted up,
 A dying world revives;
 The Jew beholds the glorious hope,
 Th' expiring Gentile lives.

The law is not made for a righteous man, to condemn him, 1 Tim. i. 9.

FOR he being dead to the law by the death of CHRIST, and living to God in righteousness, the law can condemn him no more than a dead man, or one that liveth in heaven already, nay, CHRIST, himself: for it condemns only the sin, but he is in CHRIST, without sin; the sin being abolished, the wrath and curse of the law is also removed, and grace and blessing restored in its place. CHRIST has taken all his sins upon himself, and imparted his own perfect obedience to the law to him; therefore in CHRIST he has fully satisfied all the demands of the law, and is entirely free from its dreadful denunciations in his conscience; the blood of CHRIST cleansing us from all sins, and consequently from an evil conscience, *Heb. ix. 9—14. chap x. 22.* Being sprinkled and covered with his blood and golden robes of grace, the LORD is perfectly pleased, and does not find fault with us any more. It makes intercession for us with God, crying continually “Abba, “Abba; mercy, mercy; peace, peace;” and obtains grace, pardon, life, and salvation.

Blood has a voice to pierce the skies;
Revenge, the blood of Abel cries:
But the dear stream when CHRIST was slain,
Speaks peace as loud from ev'ry vein.

Pardon and peace from God on high,
Behold, he lays his vengeance by;
And rebels that deserve his sword,
Become the favorites of the Lord.

There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency upon the sky, DEUT. xxxiii. 26.

IN these last words to Moses, we have the glory of God set forth in the communication of good to God's Israel. The whole universe God hath made for his own use, to be his chariot for him to ride in, as is represented in Ezekiel's vision. In this chariot God's seat or throne is heaven, where he sits and governs. This visible universe, subject to such continual changes and revolutions, we may compare to the wheels of this chariot. God's providence is represented by the motion of the wheels: he brings to pass his own counsels in the lower world, and manages and directs all, as a man doth his chariot, which he turns as it pleaseth him. How safe then must they be who are under the wing of the God of Jeshurun, who find him reconciled to them by the death of his Son, and feel themselves reconciled to him by the power of his grace! "He rideth on the heavens for their help," and none can outstrip his progress, or obstruct his purpose. Verily, he it is that giveth strength and victory to his people; blessed be God! Reader, is the God of Jeshurun, the God of Israel, thy God? Is he who rideth on the heavens thy help? Does thine heart trust in him alone, and does his grace subdue thine outward iniquities, and thine inbred corruptions? Is he who rideth on the sky thy excellency? Does he seem only excellent in thy eyes, and cause thee to excel in virtue? Has he planted thee among his excellent ones of the earth, and made thee to abound in faith and love, and fruits of righteousness? If the Lord is not thy help, alas! thou wilt be slain by sin, and prove a ruined soul. If the Lord is not thy excellency, thou art still an apostate spirit, a stranger unto God, and to his Christ. Awake, arise and call on God; his ear is open unto prayer; and thou art yet on mercy's ground. O call upon him speedily, and cry unto him earnestly; that thou perish not.

Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, HEB. xiii. 5. For they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction: for the love of money is the root of all evil, &c. 1 TIM. vi. 9, 10.

A Covetous man is called an idolater, and has no part in the kingdom of God: but who believes that he is covetous? Now here you see, that every one is actually covetous who is not content with what he has. And what says the apostle of such as will be rich? THEY FALL. Not only, it was possible for them to fall: no they actually fall. O reader, be frightened; destroy the covetous desires of thy heart, and keep it disentangled from temporal things; for who knows how soon you must go out of this world, and leave everything behind? Away from it with thy heart, else thy death will be very hard. The christian's motto is GOD AND ENOUGH: for he that has God, is content; and consequently always rich enough, even in poverty. And that must be a covetous man indeed, who has not enough, having God. O LORD, make me so free by faith from the love of earthly things, that I may equally praise thee, whether thou be pleased to give me something, or take it away from me; and that I may never covetously refuse that to others or to myself, that thou hast given, and should be bestowed upon us.

The rich young man whom JESUS lov'd,
Should warn us to forbear

His love of earthly treasures prov'd
A fatal golden snare. MARK x. 24.

The soul of the diligent shall be made fat, PROV. xiii. 4.

Y
OU are concerned for having no more grace. What is the reason? Perhaps you are indolent, careless and unfaithful. And though you have no warrant even for an hour to live, yet unreasonably you suppose to have time enough; therefore you are not serious, diligent, and fervent in praying for sufficient strength to be always prepared, and have boldness in death. No wonder, if you do not immediately resist sin, that it grows strong, and you always are weak and discouraged. And how can you expect to receive more grace, if you do not faithfully improve what little you have? If you would but diligently and faithfully apply yourself to the word and prayer, God will certainly not be wanting on his part to fulfil his promises, and give you enough: but not otherwise. For it is well to be observed, and we must know it once for all, that there is no such thing as making any progress in grace and carrying our point, unless we are mindful of ourselves, watching and praying against all sins, and whatever may be an hindrance on one hand; and following with all diligence that which is good, and what may be a furtherance on the other. It is not enough to use some, but we must use ALL diligence; and according as our grace is increased, our diligence must increase also, since it goes against the stream.

Right to resist the sinful pow'r
Requires a strong restraint;

We must be watchful ev'ry hour,
And pray, but never faint.

In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves, PHIL. ii. 3. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of CHRIST. For if a man think himself to be something, &c. But let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another, GAL. vi. 2, 3, 4.

IF we were truly humble, and looked upon ourselves as the most miserable of all, we should willingly submit to all adversities, and patiently bear the burdens and infirmities of others, considering, that GOD has borne with us a great deal more. Observing therefore the faults of our neighbour, we must not forget our own. Perhaps in other things we are weaker than he. This must restrain us from judging rashly, or speaking unadvisedly to others; but first, we should speak to GOD about it, and then try with gentle means to bring them to rights again. Nay, the best method is to consider our neighbour on the good, and ourselves on the bad side: and to see whether we can excuse him, and accuse ourselves. And if his fault could not be excused in any manner, we must not suffer him to stir up our corruption, but come in with prayer between GOD and him, to plead his cause before his throne in hearty love. This requires more than censorious judging. It is very easy to find fault with others; but to shew love, and restore them by prayer and brotherly correction, is quite another thing.

Bles'd are the souls who stand afar
From rage and passion, noise and war,

| GOD will secure their happy state,
And plead their cause against the great.

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Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing; PSALM cxlv. 16.

WHO considers these words enough? The hand of God being my capital cellar and storehouse, is it not a shame to be anxiously careful for any thing? Has the Lord all things in his hand? then surely I shall receive what he has for me; none will be able to withhold it. Faith has always a free access to the treasures of God, who is never wanting. Christians have their chests, cellars, and treasures in such a high place, even in God, that no thief can rob them, and they are sure to have enough in God. And though the Lord should try them with want a little while, yet he relieves them in due time: their bread must rain from heaven, rather than that they should be left without. You need not, says Christ, seek these other things, straight they shall be brought to you, if ye only abide in me. If this does not comfort and strengthen us, nothing else will. Now many rely on full pockets and purses; but if they had true faith, it would be enough that they believed and had it in God's hand, purse, and chest. If the Lord is pleased to bestow some provision upon him, he blesses him for it, and is careful to apply it well. But if he thinks proper to deny it him, he is equally content and cheerful.

The Lord is good, the Lord is kind;
Great is his grace, his mercy sure;

And the whole race of man shall find
His truth from age to age endure.

And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, it appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed, neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God. 2 CHRON. xxvi. 18.

HERE is the only blot we find on the name of Uzziah: As long as he sought the Lord, and worshipped him according to divine appointment, God made him to prosper, God helped him marvellously, till he was strong; but when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his own destruction. He was not content with the honours God had put upon him, but would usurp those that were forbidden him, like our first parents. The chief priest, and other priests, were ready to burn incense for the king, according to the duty of their office; and plainly acquainted him, that if, through a mistaken zeal, he offered to do it himself, he would incur the wrath of God, and suffer for it; but this served only to excite his wrath, till he felt the judgment of God's hand in his punishment. Though he strove with the priests, he would not strive with his Maker, but retired as soon as he was smitten with the leprosy. We see in the present instance, as in many others, that "the God we have to do with is a jealous God," who expects all that serve him shall do it according to his own institutions. Do you, Reader, come to him in the way of his appointments. Take care that you come not with unallowed fire before the Lord, lest you be also smitten. The incense of our prayers must be by faith put into the hands of our Lord Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession; else we shall find ourselves deceived, if we expect it should have acceptance with God.

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He, the LORD, will beautify the meek with salvation, PSALM cxlix. 4. And if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye, 1 PET. iii. 4. PSAL. x. 17. xxii. 26. xxxvii. 11. xlviii. 10. ISAIAH liv. 11.

ALL this is for the humble and poor in spirit: How does that agree? A poor, and yet blessed? O, yes, poor in ourselves, but blessed and glorious in CHRIST. If we never experience his glory, the reason is, we are not truly sensible of our misery; but when we are come quite low, let us confidently lay hold on CHRIST, and we shall be blessed: for all is ours. We may say, O LORD, if thou art a glorious help to the needy, lo! here is want and misery enough; therefore I come with all my want and poverty to the fulness of thy grace and riches, with my darkness to thy light, with my death to thy life. Grant that all my evils may be swallowed up by thy goodness and glorious deliverance. Mine innumerable wants I set before thee, as so many empty vessels, and desire to have them filled with thy spiritual and heavenly blessings.

O might I hear thy heav'nly tongue
But whisper, "Thou art mine!"
Those gentle words should raise my song
To notes almost divine.

How would my leaping heart rejoice,
And think my heav'n secure!
I trust the all-creating voice,
And faith desires no more.

Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, EPH. iv. 23.

OLORD, grant that I may daily and hourly repent, have evermore a tender feeling of my sins, that by the power of thy death the old man may be crucified, and by the power of thy resurrection the new man may rise up, and grow daily more and more in thy favour. Let me ever be in earnest, and look upon every day as the very first and the very last; that with each I may, as it were, begin anew to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, and so be always prepared for death and eternity. Give me grace to surmount all difficulties, and to avoid every thing that may prove a torment of conscience in the hour of death. And as there is no standing still, I humbly beseech thee to stir me up daily and hourly more and more, that I may make all haste, and "give all diligence to make my calling and election sure."

LORD, I am vile, conceiv'd in sin;
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts the race, and taints us all,

Soon as we draw our infant breath
The seeds of sin grow up for death;

The law demands a perfect heart;
But we're defil'd in ev'ry part.

Great GOD! create my heart anew,
And form my spirit pure and true;
O make me wise betimes to spy
My danger and my remedy.

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He has dispersed, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever,
 PSALM cxii. 9. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand,* ECCLES. xi. 6.

THOSE that lay up treasures on earth, suffer nothing to lie long useless, but lend it out as fast as they can; and such as desire to reap soon and plentifully, are careful to sow soon and plentifully. Therefore lend and sow ye also in good time; for there may be times when you cannot shew charity, or at least not so largely. We must not pretend to pay the debt of charity with some poor mites and pence. If you will give something, give bountifully; take your hands full, as if you were a sowing, like the poor widow with her two mites, which she sowed out freely, though it was her whole substance. But the rich ones were not so liberal, but covetously offered only what they could spare very well. Is it not said, we should sow, and consequently take hands-full; for GOD loveth a cheerful giver, and will in his turn dispense again bountifully to you, that ye shall have sufficiency in all things to every good work. (But GOD dispensing so bountifully to you, why should you then grudge him any thing, or make only such poor returns?) For what we do to our neighbour, is the same as if it were done to GOD himself, if done in faith and love.

Awake, my zeal, awake, my love,
 And serve my Saviour here below,
 In works which all the saints above,
 Which holy angels cannot do.

Awake my charity, and feed
 The hungry soul, and clothe the poor;
 In heav'n are found no sons of need;
 There all these duties are no more.

He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities, PSALM cxxx. 8. O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, JEREM. xiv. 8. In wrath remember mercy, HABAK. iii. 2.

DESPAIR not, O my soul, in any tribulation or conflict, as if it were impossible to overcome it. The all-healing word of GOD contains advice and comfort for all cases. The LORD being thy helper in all adversities, and able to turn the sharpest afflictions into the greatest blessings, he would never limate, nor withhold something from thee, if he was not willing also to heal, and give thee something better in its place. O LORD, I trust thou wilt carry me through all difficulties. Though my misery and weakness were ever so great, yet there is nothing too great for thee; it is all one to thee, to help in great or little distresses: nay, the more I am surrounded with grief and weakness, the more wilt thou pity, spare, and nourish me, as a tender mother does the least of all her children, and the more there will be occasion for thee to shew thy mighty salvation; for the least is impossible to me, but the greatest and most difficult things are possible and very easy to thee. The sharper and longer my distress and conflicts have been, the nearer, greater, and sweeter, I trust, will also be my victory and salvation; and I shall not be tempted above measure. Yes, the LORD will assist me to conquer all, even the most stubborn enemies.

There's full redemption at his throne
For sinners long enslav'd;

The great Redeemer is his Son,
And Israel shall be sav'd.

There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel; thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until you take away the accursed thing from among you, JOSHUA vii. 13. See also 2 Pet. i. 4. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

THE entertaining of every worldly lust, and indulgence of any known wilful sin, is such an accursed thing, by which we are deprived of the power of God, that we cannot stand before our enemies. Behold therefore the severity of God, JOSH. vii. 21—26. and be more earnest. Make all haste to flee from the lust of the world, especially from the lust of the eye, which is the love of money. What more needful than to break off, even the most subtle and specious bands of unrighteousness. Unless the splinters of the unjust mammon be taken out, the wound cannot be healed up. Nay, examine thyself closely in other things, and whatever sinful lust harbours in thy breast, be faithful to put it off, and flee from it, else you must not wonder at your being so weak in spirit. He that does not resist the sinful motions of his heart, will also very easily give a loose to his hands and tongue. But he that immediately subdues the inward corruptions, will certainly be preserved from their breaking out in sinful actions. O Lord; deliver me from all accursed things, and keep my heart always under thy closest inspection and discipline. Amen.

Why should my passion mix with earth,
And thus debase my heav'nly birth?

Why should I cleave to things below,
And let my God, my Saviour go?

I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, Job xiii. 6.

MY dear Reader, reflect a moment who it was that made this confession, and consider the many excellencies that he had; see chap. xxi. Doubtless you will be ready to ask, why this self-abhorrence? what did this man want? Let me give the answer for you: Before his eyes were opened, the very thing that you do, if in the like confidence; and the want of which makes every man vile and despicable in the pure eye of God, self-knowledge, or humility. Elihu charges Job home with an undue opinion of his own righteousness; and God, who by stroke upon stroke, and not one too much, had brought him to the dunghill, is represented as carrying on the same accusation against him. The whole issue in Job's humiliation, as a most important lesson of instruction to all mankind, never to stand upon their vindication with God; and the book, in this view of it, is preparatory to the gospel, and a striking comment on those words of St. Paul and the Psalmist, "All have sinned and come short "of the glory of God; in thy sight shall no man living be justified. God "be merciful to me a sinner," is a hard prayer. One eye upon the perfection of God's law, and another upon your heart, may possibly bring you up to it.

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, REV. v. 9.

IN heaven we shall have a perfect knowledge of sin, far beyond any thing we now conceive of it, in conjunction with the greatness of our deliverance; and the glory of redeeming mercy will be the eternal ground of our love and adoration. On earth, it is the great exercise and difficult work of faith, to see sin and CHRIST at the same time, or be penetrated with a lively sense of our desert, and absolute freedom from condemnation. But the more we know of both, the nearer approach we shall make to heaven; and we are our own greatest enemies, if, together with the fullest comprehension of sin, and the deepest humiliation for it, we do not look steadily unto JESUS, and see it taken away by the Lamb of God. This, though continually repeated by the heavenly choir, is called their new song; because it is always matter of as great joy to them, as if they had never sung it before; and because the love of God and of CHRIST in their redemption, is always opening upon them with new and increasing wonders. O my soul, let nothing, let not thy sin, hinder thee from beginning it now.

He worthy is blest
By spirits at rest,
Who once in this desert
His Godhead confess'd.
My soul bear a part,
For ransom'd thou art

By JESU's blood-shedding,
His burial and smart.
To him that was slain,
The scorn of Nazarene,
Be glory and honour;
Let all say, "Amen."

Y

*Follow me, Luke v. 27. And endure hardness as a good soldier of CHRIST,
2 Tim. ii. 3.*

HE that strenuously endeavours to break his own will in every thing, and resolutely overcomes his natural aversion to prayer, loves humility, and every good work, shews more power than another who can do it with more ease. With this faithfulness the Lord is so well pleased, that he rewards it at last, and gives us grace to do it also with a willing heart; but we must first be made truly sensible of the deep corruption of our hearts, that then we may use the more violence in prayer. And if we are but going on in this conflict, the delays of God are soon made up with so much greater deliverance. But if we pray only, and do not also quickly resist the propensity of our own heart in all things, there will never be such a thing as making any progress at all; since the stubbornness of our flesh requires it, that prayer and conflict must always go hand in hand. Only it is to be observed, that all this must be done in faith. Now, O Lord, grant that I may quickly take all thy hints. Thou art a faithful God indeed, thou callest, warnest, and movest me often enough; O that I was faithful, also punctually and immediately to follow thee in all things, should it be ever so much against the inclination of my heart at first. May I never, through unbelief, unfaithfulness, confusion, self will, and overdoings, bring any affliction upon me, and hurt myself, not so much as in body, much less in soul.

My dearest Saviour and my guide,
I would be walking at thy side;

O let me never run astray,
Nor follow the forbidden way.

The LORD is not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being, ACTS xvii. 27, 28. Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered, LUKE xiii. 7.

O The close and more than material care! Nothing is so mean, but it is under the providence of God, since even the least things can either hurt or profit the soul. And how sweet is it to observe his footsteps even in the minutest things, and to be satisfied that we may trust our greater and lesser concerns to his care! O LORD, grant that I may never swerve from, nor do any thing without thee; but that my goings in and goings out may be always done in thy presence, as if I had to do with none but thee; nay, as if we both lived alone together in the world. O that I could transact, as it were, all my affairs with thee alone, and in all places look upon thee as if thou wast only a GOD for me. Let me always carefully observe all the inward and outward testimonies of thy providence, so as daily and hourly to have a true sense of thy gracious presence in every thing, more or less important; and thereby to be ever strengthened in faith, and kept in a composed state of mind; considering that nothing happens by mere chance, but every thing is wisely ordered by thy providential care to our good; firmly believing, if any thing goes contrary to expectation, that something better will follow in its stead, if we only can be quiet and wait the time.

God that must stoop to view the skies,
And bow to see what angels do,
Down to our earth he casts his eyes,
And bents his footsteps downward too.

He over-rules all mortal things,
And manages our mean affairs;
On humble souls the King of kings
Bestows his counsels and his cares.

*Cleave to that which is good, ROM. xii. 9. Seek those things which are above,
COL. iii. 1.*

THE manners of such things or persons as we frequently converse with, cleave very easily to us. If we converse much with GOD and heavenly things, we shall be heavenly-minded; but if we deal much with the world and temporal things, we must be sensual and worldly-minded. Up therefore with thy heart to GOD: lift it hourly up to him; and though it sinks down often to the earth again, yet the LORD has patience, and will as often receive and accept of it again. Therefore raise it up continually, and take great care to keep it above, that it may not sink down and be defiled and cloyed with worldly things again. Thus it will be easy, whilst, on the contrary, it is a hard matter to abide in a spiritual frame; like a feather, which easily rises higher and higher when kept above aground, but moves very heavy upwards, when once fallen into the dirt. This you may take as a lively figure of an easy and heavy method in the practice of religion. Choose, now, which you please. O that I may always choose the best, namely, the work and sufferings of the LORD, and never plunge myself into needless troubles and conflicts.

Descend from heav'n immortal Dove,
Stoop down and take us on thy wings,
And mount and bear us far above
The reach of these inferior things.

Beyond, beyond this lower sky,
Up where eternal ages roll,
Where solid pleasures never die,
And fruits immortal feast the soul.

LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, &c. LUKE ii. 29, 30. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, &c. ISA. xxxv. 3, 4.

NOT the weak faith of a fearful, trembling, and tempted believer, but the wilful unbelief only is damnable. If I do not reject the ransom of CHRIST my surety, but am desirous to accept of it by faith, it is as impossible that GOD can reject me, as it is impossible for him to reject my surety, and his own decree and eternal counsel of love; which can never be. O LORD, it goes beyond the reach of all reason, how I shall depart in faith and peace, since I am the weakest of all, and would despair a thousand times for once: But as "thy peace is said to pass all understanding," PHIL iv. 7. will nevertheless be sufficient to keep even the most fearful and weakest soul; for it is not by any power of our own, but solely by thy divine power, that "we shall be kept through faith unto salvation." And it is equally the same to thee to carry the weakest or the strongest through the gates of death; for since thou art always the same wise, gracious, and mighty GOD, in all circumstances, and must do the work alone for both, thou wilt then surely lend me also thine all-sufficient aid and assistance.

Saints by the power of GOD are kept,
Till the salvation come;
We walk by faith, as strangers here,
Till CHRIST shall call us home.

LORD, at thy temple we appear,
As happy Simeon came,
And hope to meet our Saviour here;
O make our joys the same.

O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches, PSALM civ. 24. Who so is wise, and will observe those things, &c. PSALM cvii. 43.

O LORD, how many are thine unknown mercies! I am surrounded with thy goodness on all sides, and yet I observe and acknowledge them so little! if thou hast punished even the heathen, for not having minded and glorified thee by thy works, what will become of me? Pardon, **O** LORD, this my blindness and ingratitude, and be pleased to add to all thy benefactions this one more, that I may always be thankful for every thing, especially for the unspeakable gift of thy Son, and after that, for all thy works of creation and providence also. Grant that in all thy creatures I may see and adore thine infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, and be thereby continually strengthened in faith, and stirred up to thy praise and love. Thus let me always converse with, cleave to thee, and have uninterrupted communion with thee, that nothing may interfere and disturb this religious disposition of my soul in the least. Yes, **O** LORD, grant me this wisdom and close attention, for thy glory's sake. Amen.

The glories of my maker, God,
My joyful voice shall sing,
And call the nations to adore
Their Former and their King.

The brightness of our Maker's name
The wide creation fills;
And his unbounded grandeur flies
Beyond the heav'nly hills.

The sword of the L O R D and of Gideon, JUDGES vii. 20. For they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the L O R D is with us; fear them not, NUMB. xiv. 9. But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and has followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereunto he went, v. 24. Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee, PSALM lxxvi. 10.

TAKE care, O my soul, that there may also be another, namely, a kingly spirit with thee, as there was with Joshua and Caleb, not to be discouraged on account of thy weakness and great number of frailties and enemies, as if it was impossible to live holily and get the victory. Behold C H R I S T, the true and great Joshua and Caleb, marches out before thee, to make war himself against thine enemies, and who can conquer him! he is unchangeable, his spirit now is as mighty as ever, and his word as powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. Against thy various infirmities he offers also a variety of divine strength, and against each of thine enemies he holds forth to thee a particular sword in his word; and abiding in his word thou shalt surely conquer. Though the enemy should raise thine inward and outward calamities to the highest degree as so many strong walls, yet he must fall; one single word will strike him down.

Not all that tyrants think or say,
With rage and light'ning in their eyes,

Nor hell shall fright my heart away,
Should hell with all its legions rise.

Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness; I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off; and my salvation shall not tarry. We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, Isa. xlvi. 12, 13. chap. Ixv. 5.

TRUE religion is founded upon the knowledge of the true GOD. Sinners are apt to think they have a high opinion of GOD, because they think highly of his mercy; whereas GOD is as holy and as just, as he is merciful; and he will as certainly punish the guilty, as he will pardon the penitent and contrite. "GOD, I thank thee, I am not as other men are," says every self-righteous sinner; not considering, that if GOD were extreme to mark what is amiss, no flesh living could be justified: "GOD be merciful to me, a sinner;" says every true christian, and real believer. Till this be the language of thy heart, O my soul; till thou feelest thyself a lost, ruined, and helpless sinner; till thou art brought to acknowledge the justice of GOD in thy condemnation; till thou art driven to CHRIST, as thy only refuge and hope of salvation; thou art "ignorant of GOD's righteousness, art going about to establish thine own righteousness, and "thou dost not submit to the righteousness of CHRIST."

I am, saith CHRIST, the Way;

Now if we credit him,

All other paths must lead astray,

How fair soe'er they seem.

I am, saith CHRIST, the Truth;

Then all that lacks this test,

Proceed it from an angel's mouth,

Is but a lie at best.

I am, saith CHRIST, the Life;

Let this be seen by faith

It follows without further strife,

That all besides is death.

Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST, 2 TIM. ii. 3.

PRINCES combat with flesh and blood, christians wrestle with principalities and powers ; their wars give days of truce, ours not a minute of cessation ; conditions of peace there may cause retreat, nothing but death here can raise the siege ; kings, if overcome, may save themselves by flight, but christians may as soon fly from themselves, as from their enemies ; the soldier of CHRIST is in a field of continued conflict ; he cannot let fall his hands, but Amalek prevails : Not to be a conqueror, is to be a prisoner ; not to win the field, is to lose the soul ; security wounds thee, yielding kills thee, but victory crowns thee. Therefore watch as for thy life ; fight as for thy soul ; the time will come, when "these enemies thou feest to-day, thou shalt see them no more for ever ;" then thou shalt lay down thy sword, and take up thy palm, and solemnize thy victory in glory for ever. Let then the prospect of heavenly glory fire thee ; though thine enemies be powerful, yet remember to go forth against them in the strength of the Captain of thy salvation ; though assaults be many, and my enemies mighty, if GOD strengthen me, I have enough to comfort me ; for the greater my enemy, the more glorious my victory ; and the more glorious my victory, the more triumphant my glory.

I will heal your backslidings, JER. iii. 22. It is GOD who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, PHIL. ii. 13.

O My dear Saviour, I would fain believe in thee, be faithful, obedient, and work always that which is good. And since this is also thy will, I trust it shall be done; for if thou wilt and I will, who can hinder it? True, sin, flesh, world, and devils are against it; but shall these enemies be stronger than thou, the mighty God? Shall their opposition be able to quell thy work in me, if I do not consent to it? That can never be. The more violence they use upon me, the more earnest will I be upon thee in prayer; and the more I pray, the more glorious will thine assistance be: the more they hinder, the more thou wilt further, that all their hindrances shall be swallowed up by thy furtherances, as the serpents of the sorcerers in Egypt were swallowed up by the serpent of Moses. The enemy will fall by his own sword, and the greatest distress and opposition will turn to my good, and to the promoting of thy work. For if I do not abide in CHRIST, praying continually, every thing can hinder me; but abiding in him, all obstructions not only prove ineffectual, but useful and profitable.

We honour our exalted King;
How sweet are his commands!
He guards our souls from hell and sin,
By his almighty hands.

Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
We'll break thro' ev'ry foe:
The wings of love and arms of faith
Shall bear us conquerors thro'.

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I am like a green fir-tree ; from me is thy fruit found, HOSEA xiv. 8. I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, MAL. iii. 11. See also ISAI. xxvii. 2, 6.

IS it not a disagreeable thing for a gardener to see the finest blossoms and fruits destroyed by the caterpillars ? Doth it not rejoice him to see all the branches bow with ripe fruits ? O my heavenly LORD, grant that I may not displease, but rejoice thy heart also. Let me abide in CHRIST, my true vine, and always bring forth good fruits. But since every fruit has its enemies, and thou hast no sooner worked any thing, than the insects of sin endeavour to destroy it, I beseech thee to make me fearful and careful in every good work. Rebuke the devourer presently, and preserve me as a branch of CHRIST, night and day, as thou hast promised, that my fruits may endure to eternity. Doth a diligent gardener dress and cultivate his garden as well as he can, why shouldst not thou cultivate my heart also, since thou art honoured by my fruits ? O ! yes : I trust the crystal stream of thy throne will water me, that I can go and bring forth greater plenty of fruits.

Like trees of myrrh and spice we stand
Planted by GOD the Father's hand ;
And all his springs in Zion flow,
To make the young plantation grow.

Let my Beloved come and taste
His pleasant fruits at his own feast—
“ I come, my spouse, I come,” he cries,
With love and pleasure in his eyes.

I will (do it.) MATT. viii. 3. And what is that? Whatsoever thou desirest: For the Lord will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, PSALM cxlv. 19.

YEA, he does "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;" granting not only according to the notion of our narrow hearts, but according to the riches of his glory, as becomes his Majesty. CHRIST delights in great petitions; for he is a great LORD, and is rich unto all that call upon him. He has all the riches of his merits and gifts, not for himself, (since being the very GOD, he wanted nothing for himself) but only for us, even the rebellious, who sincerely call upon him. Therefore what he has as Mediator, is not his, but all belongs to me, if I but call upon him. O my soul, pray to him; nay, be much in prayer; and as often as thou pourest out thy soul before him in prayer, let nothing resound in thy heart, but these words: "I WILL, I WILL do it." As GOD can never lie, there is not one single groan lost; but every one will be found to be a jewel in the life to come; by which thy riches are increased, and one treasure put to another. O! how much is there neglected in this already! why should you not be earnest and instant now to redeem that little remaining part of thy time, by prayer for eternity, to lay up there many treasures, and richly adorn thy crown. O LORD, grant that this may be done.

Now is the time, he lends his ear,
And waits for your request;

Come, lest he rouse his wrath, and swear,
" Ye shall not see my rest."

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Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai, JOSHUA viii. 26. For this purpose the Son of GOD was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, 1 JOHN iii. 8.

THE dominion of any one sin is inconsistent with the grace of GOD and true saving faith, ROM. vi. 14. Therefore all these wicked inhabitants of thy heart must be destroyed, and none suffered to live and reign in thee; since even by one single sin we may be utterly undone and destroyed, as a bird is catched in one single snare. And though you are actually converted, and have gained the dominion over your sins; yet you must not draw back your hand, and lay the spear and sword of the Spirit aside. There is no rest or cessation of arms here. Satan left CHRIST only for a time; much more will he renew his assaults upon us again and again: nay, if a man is not watchful, but presumptuous, "he takes to him even other spirits more wicked than himself." But if one conflict lasteth long, remember that this is also the case of others; and even the ancient fathers have gone under it till they were grey. At last the victory will be the more sweet and glorious. Only above all things take the shield of faith; for faith alone triumphs, by which we are in covenant with CHRIST, and he makes one cause with us.

"Tis faith that conquers earth and hell
By a celestial pow'r;

— This is the grace that shall prevail
In the decisive hour.

Come, buy without money and without price, ISAIAH lv. 1. Come, for all things are now ready, LUKE xiv. 17. Him (be it who it will) that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out, JOHN vi. 37.

HOW could a tender mother's heart cast out her sick child calling for help? Come, my poor soul, come only as well as thou canst. Better to come in thy miserable, unwilling, and lazy condition, than not at all. Do not imagine that it will be disagreeable to CHRIST, if you must put a constraint upon yourself, and cannot come, and pray to him with a sensible joy and strong faith; for he does not say, him that comes with a sensible strong faith; but "him that comes," without any limitation, "I will in no wise cast out." It is not required to bring any money of our own worthiness, but only the whole heap of our misery along with us, and desire grace. GOD does not look upon the sensible power; (for this is his particular gift, which he could soon give, if need was) but upon the sincerity, application, and earnestness of a poor sinner. John Bunyan very fitly compares such a one to a man who would fain ride a full gallop, whose horse is hardly able to go a good trot. In this instance the intention of the rider is not to be judged by the slow paces of his horse, (which resembles our corrupt and unwilling nature) but by his whippings, spurrings, and beatings of the beast.

See, dearest LORD, our willing souls
Accept thine offer'd grace;

We bless the great Redeemer's love,
And give the Father praise.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good, ROM. xii. 21. For, who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?
1. PET. iii. 13.

THREE is none can harm you; for it is twice said, *All is yours, 1 COR. iii. 21, 22.* But what is mine must be serviceable and useful to me. We are told, ROM. viii. 18, that all things, consequently the very devils, with their whole armour, work together for our good, to make us more victorious and religious; and having so many assistants, we must at last be good indeed. For whatever would hurt us, if we take the right course, must rather serve for a sword of defence in the hand of faith. For instance, if any thing contrary happens to you, do not look upon men, but directly upon God himself, as if you had to do with him alone. Therefore take it patiently from his hands for your trial and humbling; then you have a blessing directly. If you meet with strong temptations, by the great corruptions from within and without, let them make you only so much more wise and careful as to think, because there are dangerous enemies, I must watch and use all possible vigilance. And though it is right and needful to despair of thy own sufficiency and strength; yet if you keep and press only so much closer to CHRIST in prayer and faith, like a child to its mother, when it sees a devouring beast running upon it, all the evil will certainly turn to our good.

How glorious, LORD, thy wisdom shines,
And baffles Satan's deep designs;

Thy pow'r is sov'reign to fulfil
The noblest counsels of thy will,

Prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised,
PSALM lxxii. 15.

O What a condescending King, who can always be approached! who would not pray? you say, O that my coldness and indifference would permit me to do it! But are you not sensible of your wants and miseries? Is not this coldness and backwardness misery enough? Therefore you ought also to pray, and pray most when you are so dull and drowsy; else it will never be better with you. Arise therefore and pray, the good Spirit of God will assist you in it. "Encouraged by the promises of a "prayer-hearing God, and the special assistance of the holy Spirit in this "work, we must even in the greatest conflicts not omit to resist the temp- "tations of the devil. And though we have sinned, not defer it long; "but pray directly, and say, The L ORD is merciful, and I am unworthy "and unable to pray; but alas! what shall I do? shall I wait till I am wor- "thy and able? O no, perhaps this time will never come; for I am al- "ways a great, miserable sinner. A christian stands always in need of the "L ORD's prayer; for since the sense and terror of sin does not leave him, "he can never leave off prayer." O L ORD, grant that this continual fire may never be extinguished in my heart.

Arise, my soul, from deep distress,
And banish every fear;

God calls thee to his throne of grace,
To spread thy sorrows there.

What dost thou here, Elijah? 1 KINGS xix. 19.

LET this question be supposed as addressed to us, What dost thou here in this world, into which thou art sent? Art thou working "the work of him that sent thee, or standing all the day idle?" How dost thou acquit thyself in the duties of thy particular calling? Art thou upright, conscientious, and useful therein? Art thou in the post assigned thee by heaven, truly called, and properly qualified for it? or hast thou obtruded thyself into it, without warrant or invitation, and therefore hast no cause to expect success? What dost thou here in this retirement? Is the world shut out of thy thoughts, and are the visits of the blessed Spirit invited? What dost thou here, if it be not thy wish and endeavour to have communion with the Father, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST? What dost thou here, if thy peace with an offended God is not already made, or most earnestly desired and sought after? If thou really wantest peace and safety, plead the blood of JESUS; flee to the city of refuge, before the pursuer of blood overtake thee, and thou perish from the way. "Remember Lot's wife," and look not behind thee, lest thou become a monument of wrath. What dost thou here, in times of trial and temptation; art thou flying from the danger, or boldly facing it in the name and strength of the LORD? Art thou ashamed of the cross, or dost thou willingly take it upon thee? Elijah failed here, he fled from Jezebel, such an one as Elijah feared; howl fir-trees, if the cedars be thus shaken. What dost thou here below? Art thou for pitching thy tent on this side Jordan, satisfied with thy present portion? Or art thou "looking to a better country, to a city that hath foundations, "whose builder and maker is GOD?" Life is uncertain, death approaches, the judge is at the door, then "prepare to meet thy Gon."

Arm me with jealous care,
As in thy fight to live;

And O, thy servant, LORD, prepare,
A good account to give!

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Mine eyes are ever towards the L ORD : for he shall pluck my feet out of the net, PSALM xxv. 15. Happy is the man that feareth alway, Prov. xxviii. 14.

O How long can some enemies hide themselves with their nets before our eyes, and draw us in all on a sudden. It is unspeakable how cunning and powerful our enemies are, how they lay in wait every where, that in all places and at all times we are surrounded, as it were, with many cruel murderers of souls. Blessed is he that keeps clear from self-confidence; but rather fearing always, says within himself, as soon as he awakes in the morning, Who knows what temptations I may meet with to-day? perhaps when I rise, by the first step my feet may be entangled in dangerous snares and nets. And as self-confidence always will, but true confidence in thee, O L ORD, never shall be ashamed, ROM. ix. 33. grant, I beseech thee, that distrusting myself I may fully put my trust on thee, watching evermore in all things, and looking cautiously in all places about me, where there is any fear of danger. Whatever I am about to do or to speak, let me first look upon and converse with thee; that thus keeping always close to thee, I may be preserved against the power and craft of mine enemies, as in a strong-hold; and confidently say, according to thy own pattern, given PSALM xvi. 8. "I have set the L ORD before me; because he is at my right-hand, I shall not be moved."

God is my portion and my joy;
His counsels are my light;
He gives me sweet advice by day,
And gentle hints by night.

My soul would all her thoughts approve
To his all-seeing eye:
Nor death nor hell my hope shall move,
While such a friend is nigh.

My Father works hitherto, and I work, (as also the Holy Spirit) JOHN v. 17.

My poor soul, should the blessed Trinity not be able to destroy the works of the devil, and fulfil his good-will in thee? O! yes, he works both to will and to do; and that every thing which is above your own power, he works, and nothing else. If you can do little, he works much; if nothing at all, so much the better, then he works all: For he is our All; since we are nothing, and can do nothing. And happy are we that we can have him for our assistant in all things; and that the children of God are not required to direct their own steps, but shall be led by their heavenly Father. Now, O LORD, since by the will, guidings, and workings of my own heart, I throw only so many hindrances and blocks in my way; grant, I beseech thee, that in true dependence on thee, I may venture every thing; and, despairing of my own sufficiency, may always abide in thee, draw all necessary strength from thee by prayer, and bring forth many good fruits which may last to eternity. For the power in me being an eternal power, thy work, weak as it seems now, will last eternally, and none shall be able to destroy it.

Thy counsels, LORD, shall guide my feet
Through this dark wilderness;
Thy hand conduct me near thy seat,
To dwell before thy face,

What if the springs of life were broke,
And flesh and heart should faint,
God is my soul's eternal rock,
The strength of ev'ry saint,

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you, JAMES iv. 7, 8. And thus the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availed much, chap. v. 16.

O My dear soul, draw nigh to God in prayer, and he will draw nigh to thee; be instant in it, and the devil cannot stand against thee: for the incense of prayer chases all devils, as the smoke the bees; it works wonderful great things, and will make possible what seemeth most impossible. God having given thee many things already, this is a great encouragement to hope also for that which thou lackest yet. Therefore only pray confidently, and you shall receive evermore; for unbelief is the only reason that God cannot work wonders for us.

My God I bow before thy feet,
When shall my soul get near thy seat?
When shall I see thy glorious face,
With mingled majesty and grace?

How should I love thee, and adore,
With hopes and joys unknown before!
And bid this trifling world be gone,
Nor tease my heart, so near thy throne.

Creatures with all their charms should fly
The presence of a God so nigh;
My darling sins should lose their name,
And grow my hatred and my shame.

My soul should pour out all her cares,
In flowing words or flowing tears;
Thy smiles should ease my sharpest pain,
Nor shall I seek my God in vain.

There is none good but one ; that is, God, MATT. xix. 17. But every imagination of the thoughts of our hearts is only evil continually, GEN. vi. 5.

A Christian feeling continually the vile corruption of his heart with grief, thinks himself to be the least of all the saints ; but a Hypocrite, having little sense of sin, takes himself to be better than others. Therefore we cannot be said to have truly repented, except we have an experimental knowledge that there is no good in us, no, not so much as the least degree. Nay, when we are even come to this, and are converted, we must not presumptuously imagine to have got over all the mountains ; after many years we may see such abominations, which we thought little of in the beginning. Consequently, we have always reason to be afraid of our own hearts, and to depend entirely on free grace, like a poor penitent condemned malefactor ; else the Pharisee will soon lift up his head again. But he that is really convinced he is such a miserable lost sinner, and has no good in him by nature, pleading guilty in all things, and seeking every thing freely in CHRIST, is actually partaker of all the merits of CHRIST, and can look upon himself as entirely justified in him. Now, O LORD, grant that I may patiently know and cleanse myself more and more ; and though I cannot effect it by my own power, yet my comfort is, that thou art good alone, and art willing and able to work in me all that is good.

Nature has all its glories lost,
When brought before thy throne ;

No flesh shall in thy presence boast,
But in the LORD alone.

Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages, EXOD. ii. 9.

AS Moses was ordered to be saved by the most cruel enemy's daughter ; so Satan himself, even when he meditates our destruction, must be a means of our life. See also MATT. xii. 48. *Who is my mother ? &c.* ISA. viii. 10. chap ix. 6. O LORD JESUS, thou being also a child born unto me, and I willing to receive thee as my IMMANUEL, thou wilt be my shield and exceeding great reward, and defend me powerfully against all my enemies. O my dear Saviour, since thou art mine, all is mine, even thy Father, thy Spirit, and thy heavenly glory ; all accidents, all enemies must work for my good, and be instruments and ministers of my salvation. O that I may never fear any thing, but, thinking directly it is mine, may only make good use of every thing. Thus even the very worst would turn to my greatest blessing ; and without it perhaps I should want as needful a thing, as a mill or a ship does when destitute of wind and water.

My soul, survey thy happiness,
If thou art found a child of grace,
How richly is the gospel stor'd !
What joy the promises afford !
All things are now the gift of God,
And purchas'd with our Saviour's blood :

While the good Spirit shews us how
To use and to enjoy them too.
If peace and plenty crown my days,
They help me, LORD, to speak thy praise :
If bread of sorrows be my food,
Those sorrows work my real good.

Speaking unto yourselves in psalms and hymns, EPH. v. 19. Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, COL. iii. 16.

IF we are obliged to promote the temporal good of our neighbour, how much more the spiritual, by edifying discourses. But how is it? The children of God, when somebody visits them, (says a certain divine) are sometimes troubled, and know not what discourse to enter upon: at last they begin, if not entirely in vain, yet perhaps unprofitable discourses, or at least they suffer others to do it, and are silent at it. I will tell you what I have done in such cases: I first prayed to God, saying, "O good God, here I receive a guest, and having nothing to set before and treat him with, I pray thee to give me the right bread for him;" which the Lord was pleased to hear in such a gracious manner, that I could soon enter into an edifying discourse. And thus we keep our conscience clean, though perhaps the lips are frozen up. Some foolish philosophers, to the great offence of others, mock at divine things, and even at prayer; as if natural reason and will was not corrupted, and highly wanted to be prayed for. But it is fulfilled with them, what St. Paul says, ROM. i. 22. What will become of these poor scoffers upon their dying bed, and at the day of judgment. O that they would take warning while it is time.

Now if some proper hour appear,
Let none be over-aw'd;

But let the scoffing sinners hear
That we can speak for God.

Tell his disciples, and Peter (who was deeply fallen) especially, MARK xvi.

7. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous for the whole world, 1 JOHN ii. 1, 2. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees, HEB. xi. 12.

HAST thou been slack, unfaithful, and fallen away, O poor soul, thou art not to make light of it: but why wilt thou continue in thy fallen condition any longer and complain? Get thee up, and ask pardon of CHRIST; he is ready to forgive and receive thee again, like Peter, "having received gifts for the rebellious." Delay not to lay hold of thy ransom, which is greater than all the sins of the world, considering that it is paid even for this very sin, whose remission is purchased by it already. Therefore be not discouraged, much less suffer the temptation of drawing back to the world to prevail upon you. The LORD even now reaches forth his hands to thee anew by this very word; come, lift thyself up at it, and be careful for the time to come to be so much more cautious, humble, and gentle towards others; for a Christian's feet will slide, but only into humility.

Salvation! O the joyful sound,
'Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sov'reign balm for every wound,
A cordial for my fears,

Bury'd in sorrow and in sin,
At hell's dark door I lay;
But I arise, by grace divine,
To see a heav'nly day.

Behold we come unto thee, JER. iii. 22. (and) I will come unto you, JOHN xiv. 18. A lively representation of this happy meeting, see LUKE xix. 4, 5, 6. *Zaccheus ran . . . and CHRIST said unto him, Make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.*

O My dear Saviour, since I come to thee, and thou to me, we shall certainly meet one another. Who will oppose and obstruct it? Devil and sin? O no! this wall of separation is pulled down. "CHRIST says, Come unto me, I am "not an angry judge, but a loving Mediator between GOD and thy frightened "conscience; keep to me, and fear not wrath. Why, therefore, I sit here, "that, believing in me to make intercession for thee with GOD, no wrath nor "disgrace can befall thee. Should wrath and punishment come upon thee, it "must first come upon me; which is quite impossible, since he is the dear Son "of GOD, in whom dwells all the fulness of grace, and the Father looking "upon him, his wrath must vanish away, and every thing in heaven and "earth be changed into smiles of love and grace," EPH. i. 6—Dangers and conflicts being hot, GOD hastens with his assistance. At other times he tarries, and the work of our whole renovation goes on by little and little, that improving in the exercise of patience and faith, we may also bear with others, and learn not only to quicken our diligence, but also to wait for him.

In thine own ways, O GOD of love,
We wait the visits of thy grace;

Our souls' desire is to thy name,
And the remembrance of thy face.

Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me, PSALM xxxviii. 4.

IT is a sure sign that a man is awaked out of his sleep, when he discovers and sees the error of his dream: in the drawing up of water out of a deep well, so long as the bucket is under water, we feel not the weight of it, but as soon as it cometh above water, it begins to hang heavy on the hand. When a man diveth under water, he feeleth no weight of the water, though there may be many tuns of it over his head, whereas half a tub full of the same water, taken out of the river, and set upon the same man's head, would be very burdensome to him, and make him soon grow weary of it. In like manner, so long as a man is, as it were, overhead in sin, he is not sensible of the weight of sin, it is not troublesome to him; but when he begins once to come out of that state of sin wherein he lay and lived before, then beginneth sin to hang heavy upon him, and he groans under the weight thereof. So, so long as sin is in the will, the proper seat of sin, a man feeleth no weight of it, but, like a fool, it is sport and pastime to him to do evil. It is therefore a good sign that sin is removed out of its seat, out of its chair of state, when it becomes ponderous and burdensome to us; and such a sense of sin may well be considered as an entrance into a state of grace.

*Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings, JER. iii. 22.
See also LUKE xv. 20. When he was yet a great way off. —*

HEAR therefore the voice of thy loving Father and Shepherd, O thou backsliding child and lost sheep, crying earnestly, RETURN, RETURN. Do not run on in the broad way with the world any longer. Are you not tired yet of the husks of the world? Do you feel no troubles in your soul? shall not these drive thee to GOD? Lo! thy Father and Shepherd seeks thee. He is gone forth to call and meet thee already. He will receive thee willingly and joyfully. Come only praying as the prodigal son, and he will freely forgive thee all, though thou hadst sinned ever so much. He is also able to heal and correct the most desperate corruptions of thy heart; he can deliver thee from the very jaws of hell and the devil. Nay, if thou even wast possessed with more than seven devils, he can still cast them out. Begin only to call upon him earnestly in prayer, and, poor and wretched as thou art, come to him as the physician of thy soul; for the physician and the sick, the rich and the poor, are the best suited to one another. He healeth all our diseases, and can make possible, what seems most impossible to thee.

Come, all ye vilest sinners, come,
He'll form your souls anew;

His gospel and his heart have room
For rebels, such as you.

Watch ye therefore and pray always, LUKE xxi. 36. Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, HEB. xii. 1.

THE hearts of men are not like unto clocks, which only want to be wound up once a day; O no! the dulness and distraction is too great and dangerous. We must lift them many times a day, yea, watch continually to lay aside every weight. Our going out and coming in, nay all things, even the very least, we must do with prayer, always strictly examining what is the will of the LORD; else, if they are done after our own will, they do not tend to the glory of GOD, and cannot be attended with his blessing. But if we earnestly strive against our own will in prayer, willingly suffering every hour what the LORD thinks proper to lay upon us, and will be ruled by his hints, and slight strokes of his rod, many heavy afflictions, scourges, and whips can be avoided; for the burdens which we bring upon ourselves by our own will and impatience, are always the heaviest. A christian has daily his proper burden and affliction, like a clock, its weights, by which the flesh is kept under, so that the spirit can rise up. Therefore when any thing comes cross, he looks upon it as his weight for the day, to stir him up to the exercise of prayer and meditation in the word of GOD. O LORD, grant that I may always bear thy easy yoke, and never be the cause of my own distress and dulness.

Wait on the LORD, ye trembling saints,
And keep your courage up;

He'll raise your spirit when it faints,
And far exceed your hope.

Give an account of thy stewardship, LUKE xvi. 22.

O LOR^D, how have I wasted my time, goods, and faculties! O pardon me for thine infinite mercy's sake; blot out my debt by thy blood; and grant, that keeping henceforth daily and hourly a good account, and acting more prudently, faithfully, and diligently, my reckoning may not be false at last. But preserve me also from all needless cares; since the care where to get something is not the steward's business, but only to husband every thing faithfully. "Teach me, O LOR^D, and give me wisdom "and grace to govern my house, and manage all my affairs rightly. Be "thou the principal governor and father of my family; I will be nothing "but thy servant; direct me only in all things that I may not suffer or do "any harm." He that does not expostulate with GOD, but, justifying him, accuses himself to be guilty in all things, even in his best performances, will be justified again by him through the righteousness of his dear Son. And being thus adopted of GOD, he is ready and willing to be governed and directed by him in all things as a child.

That awful day will surely come,
Th' appointed hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.

Thou lovely chief of all my joys,
Thou sov'reign of my heart!
How could I bear to hear thy voice
Pronounce the sound, DEPART?

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, Cor. xiii. 5.

MANY would be converted and become believers, if they did not presumptuously pretend to it, thinking they were not heathens, but had faith already. For such as have actually faith, often doubt whether they have any or not; and those that are without, imagine they have enough. But faith is only wrought in the souls of those who are deeply humbled by a thorough conviction of the greatness and heinousness of their sins; confessing themselves not only with their lips, but with a true sense of their hearts, to be the chief of sinners; and looking upon themselves as the most unworthy of all creatures. Without this repentance we do not enter through the right gate, and our faith is a false imagination. For faith is the greatest and most difficult thing, even to a child of God; it receives CHRIST into the heart, and overcomes the devil, world, and all sins; which is not easily done. Therefore, if the generality of people had true faith, nothing was easier than that; for what can be easier than to conceive thoughts and imaginations of any thing? then there would be no need to pray for faith to strive and examine ourselves; consequently these words were superfluous in the Bible. For such a faith has every one, even the most wicked. But they deceive themselves, for faith is said to be the victory over the world. And if the first Christians had need to examine themselves, how much more have we? Therefore, the best and safest way is, to pray earnestly for that faith which has boldness, and triumphs even in death.

O LORD, thy grace and power display,
Let guilt and death no longer reign;

Save me in thine appointed way,
Nor let my humble faith be vain.

For thy name's sake lead me and guide me. Pull me out of the net, &c. PSALM xxxi. 3—5. When the ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee, flee before thee, NUMB. x. 35.

EVERY one having his own particular gift, has also his own particular enemies, who lay various nets and hindrances in his own way. But as every body must clear the way for a king when he travels; much more so our enemies, when the King of kings guides us and goes before us. Grant only, O LORD, that all my goings and restings may be done at thy will, NUMB. iv. 17—23. Be gloriously pleased to go always before me, and to make room, that mine enemies may be scattered and fall into their own nets. For thou, who dwellest in heaven, laughest at all, even mine inward spiritual enemies; and art willing and able to confound the greatest craft and power even of the most inveterate and dangerous. And "since thou enlightenest my darkness, and art a buckler to all those that trust in thee; and not only teacheth my hands to war, but even fightest for me as the GOD of my covenant," PSALM xviii. 28—36.) I shall surely come off more than conqueror.

Great God, preserve my conscience clean;
Wash me from guilt, subdue my sin;
Thy love shall guard me from surprise,
Tho' threat'ning dangers round me rise.

My faith would seize some promise, LORD;
There's pow'r and safety in thy word:
Not all that earth and hell can say,
Shall tempt or drive my soul away.

—*And Moses said unto them, This is the bread, which the LORD hath given you to eat, EXOD. xvi. 16.*

THIS manna was entirely different from the common manna, which is shook from the leaves of trees, and used only in medicine; this dropped down from the clouds, and was truly a miraculous production, as is evident from the following circumstances; that it fell but six days in the week; that it fell in such a prodigious quantity as sustained almost three millions of souls;—that a double portion of it fell the day before the Sabbath, and none on that day, &c.

This manna is called “spiritual meat,” 1 COR. x. 3, because it was typical of spiritual blessings in heavenly things. CHRIST himself is the true manna, the bread of life, of which that was a figure, JOHN vi. 49—51. The word of GOD is the manna, by which our souls are nourished, MATT. iv. 4. The comforts of the Spirit are “hidden manna,” REV. ii. 17. These come down from heaven, as the manna did, are the support and comfort of the divine life in the soul, while we are in the wilderness of this world. The manna they gathered in the wilderness was not to be hoarded up, but eaten; so they that have received CHRIST, must by faith live upon him, and not receive his grace in vain; they that did eat manna in the wilderness hungered again; whereas they that feed on CHRIST, by faith shall never hunger. “LORD, evermore give us this bread!”

*What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and what is thy request? It shall be even given
thee to the half of the kingdom, ESTHER v. 3.*

DOST thou want nothing, O poor soul! Hast thou nothing to ask? O yes! you say, a great deal. Well then, draw near to thy gracious King and Bridegroom without fear. Lo! he holds out his golden sceptre to thee, saying, Ask, only ask, not only the half, but my whole kingdom shall be granted; nay, I will give myself unto thee. O dear soul, pray, and tell him every thing that is wanting, be it ever so great or ever so small. His loving kindness will hear even the least petition; nay, he will pretend to be ignorant of what thou dost not tell him. But whatever is poured out before him, is actually addressed and lodged in its proper place, and does not lie upon thy heart any longer, but upon his heart, which cannot rest till you are relieved. And since you have experienced his assistance so often, in greater and lesser things, you may depend upon his being as willing and able now to help thee out of all troubles. We often imagine we are willing, and drawing near him, but he was unwilling, and refused our request: but it is so, he rather draws us, and desires our relief more than we do; for he that works even this willing mind.

Are these the happy persons here,
Who dwell the nearest to their God?
Has God invited sinners near?
And Jesus bought this grace with blood?

Go then, my soul, address the Son,
To lead thee near the Father's face
Gaze on his glories yet unknown,
And taste the blessings of his grace.

A a

What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? LUKE viii. 18.

O LORD, dost thou ask me also this question? O yes! Well then, I answer, That I may see how gracious thou art; that knowing thy love in thy light, I may love thee again. This is the sum and substance of all my prayer; because thou requirest it so seriously of me, 1 COR. xvi. 22. But thou dost not require it as of myself, well knowing that I can do nothing: but signifyest only what I am to ask of thee, and what thou art willing to give and to work. For thou dost not require any thing, but what thou workest thyself; and workest every thing, what thou requirest. Therefore, faith and love being required by thee, I require the same from thee again. Grant, O grant them to me, that I may return them to thee again. And since nothing is pleasing to thee, but what is thy own gift, I trust that thou wilt certainly hear and fulfil this my request. However, as my salvation is not grounded on my own, but on thine and thy Father's love and counsel, to save me by free grace through thy merits I go on, covered all over with grace and pardon. This is treasure enough, by which my heart can be well satisfied.

He that can shake the worlds he made,
Or with his word, or with his rod;
His goodness how amazing great!
And what a condescending God!

Our sorrows and our tears we pour
Into the bosom of our God;
He hears us in the mournful hour,
And helps to bear the heavy load.

In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength, ISA. xxx. 15. In your patience possess ye your souls, LUKE xxi. 9.

CHRISTIANS must suffer patiently. This is their armour, God fighting for and assisting them. But when we are unwilling to suffer, going about to make complaints every where, and to seek human comfort, or to rid ourselves, we neglect and lose the comfort and aid of the **LORD**; we are stirring up the wasp-nest of our unruly thoughts, and bring more trouble upon ourselves and others; nay, we are fighting against God, who thereby intends to cure our impatience, pride, and anger. For the more we are peevish and wild, the more desperate is our disease; and consequently we have so much more need of such sharp but wholesome trials of afflictions, to mortify these wild passions of the flesh. Therefore we must not presume to murmur or complain, which will only make bad worse: For he that will avoid one trouble, perhaps runs into ten others. Sometimes it is possible and easy to rid ourselves, but the help is not so glorious and blessed, as if we had waited for the help of the **LORD**.

Sure I must bear, if I would reign;
Increase my courage, **LORD!**
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

Must I be carry'd to the skies,
On flow'ry beds of ease,
While others suffer'd for the prize,
And sail'd through bloody seas?

Who so loveth instruction, loves knowledge; but he that bates reproof, is brutish,
PROV. xii. 1.

THEFORE we should take and make the best of the reproofs of others, though they were not without blemishes; and not be like thorns and briers, pricking and hurting those that touch them. Nothing can be said so bad of us, which we have not the roots of in our heart. And though we are convinced of and strive against our own weakness, yet it may not be so earnestly that we conquer. Therefore GOD comes to our assistance in a sharp reproof of others; for he knows how to use even the faults of others to our good. And if we receive every thing as from him alone, striving so much against this our frailty, that we may not be offensive to our neighbour any more, we certainly gain a great victory and blessing. But if we grow impatient, and make many excuses, being unwilling to put up any thing, we make evil worse, and neglect the amendment of ourselves and others. O LORD, make us better, and give us patience.

How should the sons of Adam's race
Be pure before their GOD?
If he contend in righteousness,
We fall beneath his rod.

To vindicate my words and thoughts
I'll make no more pretence;
Not one of all my thousand faults
Can bear a just defence.

Be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 PETER i. 16.

HOLINESS is a plant of the LORD's own planting ; its root is nourished by the waters of life, and the dew of grace lays continually on its branches ; it is not to be found on nature's ground in its highest improvements ; *Morality* saith it is not in me, it grows only in the garden of grace ; there must be a union with CHRIST by faith, a new nature, and a new heart, for holiness to strike root in, before the fruits thereof can be produced in life and conversation. " Holiness, (said a great writer,) appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, " calm nature ; bringing an inexpressible purity, brightness, peaceableness, and ravishment to " the soul ; it makes the soul like a field or garden of GOD, with all manner of pleasant flowers, " all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed ; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gentle vivifying " beams of the sun. The soul of a true christian appeared like such a little white flower, as " we see in the spring of the year, low and humble on the ground ; opening its bosom to re- " ceive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory ; rejoicing as it were, in a calm rapture, diffusing " around a sweet fragrancy ; standing peaceably and lovingly in the midst of other flowers round " about, and in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun. Holiness is " an excellent thing ; it puts a glory upon all other graces ; it carries a graceful majesty along " with it ; beholders are astonished at it ; opposers cannot but admire it." Reader, are you such a flower, such a plant of renown ? then look forward with rapture to the paradise above, where holiness will bloom for ever.

Aa 3

For wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth, EXOD. xxxiii. 15.

READER, do you adopt the language of Moses, and request with him, that in all your removals, GOD's presence may go with you? That you be not permitted to stir without this distinguishing testimony, that you are in the path of duty? Are you waiting upon the L ORD, earnest to serve him in sincerity and truth; "not being conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of your mind," and desirous to be numbered with his separate people? Then you may expect the divine blessing, and your way to be prosperous. It was a distinguishing privilege of the Israelites, that they were to dwell alone, and not to be reckoned among the nations; and it is the privilege and duty of the spiritual Israel, to be separated and distinct from the world; they are a separate people in the love of GOD; in their election in CHRIST; in the covenant of grace made with them in him; in effectual vocation; in their being seated with him at his right hand in the day of judgment; and in their being with him to all eternity. Nor are they reckoned among the nations, but as they are called out of them, and generally treated as the refuse and off-scouring of all things, they do not reckon themselves to be of the world, but as pilgrims and strangers in it. L ORD, let my lot be among thy separate people, the righteous, both now and for evermore.

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And thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins,
MATT. i. 21.

SIN is the deadliest foe we have; it cast our first parents out of paradise; it defaced God's image in man; it brought pain, sickness, and death into the world, a spiritual death into the soul; it causes a distance from God, and a dislike to his holy ways; it gave Satan an interest in, and a power over mankind; it once drowned the world, and will destroy it at last; it exposes body and soul to the just judgment of a holy God, and will sink every unpardonable offender into everlasting perdition. How is the deadly foe to be conquered? How is this fretting leprosy of the soul to be cleansed? Reader, be careful in this matter, and seek after a remedy that will be lasting and efficacious. Duties, prayers, tears, sacrifices, morality, and partial reformations, avail nothing in this case; all below CHRIST JESUS will prove physicians of no value. JESUS is the only Saviour, God the Father sent him into the world to save sinners, his name implies the same, he is "called JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins," his blood is the only propitiation for sin; this sprinkled upon the heart by the Spirit, and apprehended by faith, removes the guilt and curse of sin, speaks pardon and peace, his grace breaks the power, and turns our love to it into an utter hatred of it; thus is holiness secured in the heart and walk, as well as peace in the conscience. He will save from the very being of sin, after the conflict between flesh and spirit is over; his people are all that believe in him, and depend upon him for pardon, peace, and everlasting salvation. In that happy number, Reader, may thou and I be found; may we be enabled to look to him, to receive him as our LORD JESUS, able and willing to save to the very uttermost. And may we walk as the redeemed of the LORD, in righteousness and true holiness all the days of our life. Amen.

Pour out your heart before GOD, PSALM lxii. 8.

WHAT a different view does this animated text give of *Praying*, opposed to the usual expression of *SAVING our Prayers*; saying what our books or our parents teach us; saying what we have been long used to say, perhaps of our own composing, in a formal and customary manner. **T**O **POUR OUT** our hearts, is similar to emptying a vessel of all its contents, so that nothing remains; and, O! what a pleasing, awful, important thing must this be: whatever is in my heart, my guilt or fears, my sins or sorrows, my cares and crosses, my wants, my dangers, my weaknesses, temptations, darkness, and ignorance, my doubts and anxieties respecting both body and soul, myself and others, the church and the world, every thought that arises relating either to past, present, or future, I have leave to empty myself of, to pour out by drops, or in a more copious stream, till not one burden remains, and this not by myself, or before men, for what help can I get from either? but before God, who is a prayer-hearing God, both able and willing to relieve, and who will not turn away from his self-emptying creatures, but will fill them with his consolations, which are neither few nor small. He can send a Hannah away no longer sad, can say "Son, or daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," and send an instructor to an inquiring Cornelius to inform him what he must do. No wonder then that real prayer is so much unknown, or is such a cordial when it is made before him, who is a refuge for us. Away then for ever with the prayer of the formalist, may I learn fervency of devotion from my heavenly Master, who in his agony prayed till drops of blood fell down, and in all my sorrows and distresses, spiritual and temporal, in life and in death, like him may I be heard of my heavenly Father in the things that I fear. To a suffering Jesus I look for pardon and cleansing; O let me be accepted in the Beloved, and purged daily from my defilements, and so become a vessel to honour, sanctified for the master's use for ever. Amen.

By the grace of GOD I am what I am.—Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of GOD.—As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 COR. xv. 10. 1 PET. i. 23. and chap. ii. 2.

WHAT made the wonderful difference between Saul the Pharisee and Paul the Christian ? GRACE. What made him trample upon his former legal righteousness, and desirous to be found in the righteousness of CHRIST ? GRACE, illuminating grace. Wherein consists the difference between the mere moralist and the real christian ? There may be a moral deportment where there is no grace, no principle of saving divine faith ; there may be the fear of the LORD, taught by the precept of men, and not by the Spirit of God. One may attend the externals of religion ; may have a regard to outward decency ; may have a name to live while dead ; be high in profession, and at the same time a stranger to the power of godliness ; many things outwardly decent and praise-worthy may be done without a principle of grace in the heart, witness Paul before his conversion.

Have I this principle called GRACE, in my soul ? Have I been born of the incorruptible seed ? Have I got the taste of a child of GOD ? have I tasted that the Lord is gracious ? Then will I desire the sincere milk of the word : the babe loves the pure milk from the breast, I will love the milk of the pure word, and from these breasts of consolation will seek comfort and nourishment for my soul. Redeeming love shall be my delightful theme ; it will sweeten every thing in the service of JESUS, will constrain to extensive usefulness in my sphere of life ; the grace of God in CHRIST Jesus will enlarge my views, keep me humble in heart, and give the praise where alone it is due. Through the sincere milk of the word may I grow daily, and be nourished up to eternal life. Amen.

We must all appear before the judgments-seat of CHRIST, 2 COR. v. 10.

AND are there scoffers; who madly walk after their own lusts, and question the coming of the LORD? The hour hastens, when infidelity shall doubt no more; "The LORD himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God." How will sinners fade away, and be afraid in their close places, when, visible to all, the Judge shall appear on his great white throne, and from his face the earth and the heaven flee away? Before him shall stand the whole race of man, small and great, and by the testimony of God, and their own consciences, it shall be fully proved, and openly declared what they have been, and what they have done.—Then sentence most righteous, irrevocable, and big with eternity, shall be pronounced.—On the wicked, everlasting punishment; on the righteous, life everlasting! Meditate terror, you obstinate transgressors, behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; they also, which pierced him, and all the wicked kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. "Now, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation;" now embrace him, as your offered, your all-sufficient Saviour; so shall you be for ever delivered from him as your angry Judge. If this you neglect, how shall you abide the day of his coming in flaming fire, to take vengeance on all them that know not God, and who obey not the gospel? Lift up thy head, my soul, none else is judge but CHRIST; will he, who bore my sins, plead against me in judgment? No, but he will put strength in me; I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that salvation of my soul, which I have committed to him against that day.

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We being many are one body in CHRIST, and every one members one of another,
ROM. xii. 5.

O The blessed communion of saints! one member has the benefit of all the other members gifts, prayers, and ministrations. One prays for all, and all pray for one. What one has, the other enjoys also. It may be truly said of them, ALL IS YOURS. There is no envy, no haughtiness, no strife or harm; for why should I envy that which is my own? why should I despise that which serves for my necessary assistance? and why should I strive against and hurt him, whose hurt is my own? Is there any strife or collision between the members of our natural body? By no means; they all serve, help and assist one another; and if one be injured and suffers, all the rest, as it were, run to its relief, and are neither tired or angry if the healing does not follow immediately. O LORD, unite us all into such a communion and general sympathy, and stop all open and subtle divisions amongst our members, who pretend to something extraordinary, and to be wise above the rest. Restraine that mean sectarian and self-conceited spirit of the world, granting true humility to all; then we shall live in a solid union and uninterrupted harmony.

O glorious portion of the saints!
Let love suppress our sore complaints,

And tune our hearts and tongues to sing,
"All glory to our sov'reign King."

Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of CHRIST, ministered by us, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living GOD; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart, 2 COR. iii. 3.

THE image is beautiful and instructing.—“ The epistle of CHRIST written (not in tables of stone) not on a stony obdurate heart, but on a heart of flesh; a heart softened by grace, and made susceptible of good impressions:—The heart, the seat of vital religion. So runs the gracious promise, JER. xxxi. 33.

The word read and preached is ineffectual without the operation of the Spirit of God. By the Spirit christians are cast into the gospel mold; thereby get evangelical, spiritual, and heavenly dispositions; their resemblance to CHRIST is gradually increased; they have the witness in themselves; have the comfortable experience that they are CHRIST's, when they can read his image on their hearts.—They are manifestly declared to others, that they are the epistle of CHRIST, by their good conversation and conduct in the world, confessing him before men, and speaking forth his praise. “ Holiness to the LORD,” is inscribed on this epistle. They also resemble one another in mutual love, and in love to all that bear their master's image. They are the epistle of CHRIST, as sealed by his spirit to the day of redemption; are enabled to shew forth the truth, reality, and power of religion in times of affliction, and often at a dying hour.

Am I the epistle of CHRIST? Do I read the epistles of CHRIST in my Bible? Do I see the finger of God in this divine book? Do I read the mind of God there? O blessed discovery! What condescending grace! The great God by his spirit to dictate epistles so loving and kind! The great God, whom I have offended, to send me a pardon, not only in his word, but by his Son also! Do I read the word of reconciliation in his gospel? Do these glad tidings of great joy revive my drooping spirits? I would read this epistle from heaven over and over again. O how much do I find in it, while the LORD the Spirit opens the understanding to understand the scriptures!

ALLELUIA, REV. xix. 1.

THOU didst begin the year, O my soul, with an HOSANNA, imploring the LORD's blessing, canst thou now conclude it with an ALLELUIA? Surely thou canst celebrate the praise of a gracious and loving God? Take a review of the year past; hast thou not had many mercies? Have not the eyes of the LORD been upon thee for good from the beginning of the year to the ending thereof? Hath he not conducted thee through many seen and many more unseen dangers? Canst thou not with truth as well as gratitude set up thine Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the LORD hath helped me," 1 SAM. vii. 12. If thou hast not been so fruitful in good works as might have been expected, is thy LORD to blame, or thyself? Whatever good has been done in thee or by thee, surely belongs to the favour of God; and whatever has caused shame or humiliation, is nowhere chargeable but upon thyself. "Praise the LORD then, "O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name; praise the LORD, O my soul, "and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities; "who saveth thy life from destruction, and year after year crowneth thee with mercy and loving kindness;" and will at last crown thee with everlasting glory. Thou wilt soon, O my soul, enter upon another year; let dear-bought experience teach thee to avoid all occasions of evil, and keep thee close to thy God. If thou liveth to see another day set out afresh, and remember to offer thy daily sacrifice of obedience as well as of praise to thy gracious God. Let every revolving day and year remind thee of a dissolution of thy clay tenement, and that happy period when thou shalt sing uninterrupted Alleluias before the throne of God and the LAMB forever and ever.

This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.

356 Additional Page for Leap-Year, FEBRUARY 29.

—Behold these three years I come seeking for fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?—LORD, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down, LUKE xiii. 7---9.

THOU fruitless fig-tree, thou barren professor, dost thou hear this, and not tremble? GOD is come seeking fruit; will thy bare profession, thy knowledge of the principles of religion, satisfy the great GOD? Will the notions of truth in thy head, thy talking and disputing, thy hearing the word preached, thy commanding or censuring sermons and preachers, just as thou art in the mood, will this serve thy turn? and wilt thou thus endeavour to ward off the heart-searching GOD? Know thou, GOD is come to seek for fruit, good fruit, and precious from thee; not the fruit of good words only, but the fruit of good works; not the fruit of talking well, but of walking well, the fruits of holiness in life and conversation; fruit short of this GOD will not regard. If thy conscience is awakened, look to thy merciful High Priest, consider well his intercession for such a barren soul as thou art, “LORD, let it alone,” &c. Father let this man live one year longer; O turn away from this thine anger; I will yet see what may be done; I will take other methods; I will try what corrections may do, perhaps the rod may work more upon him than my word has hitherto done, and may tend to make his barren heart fruitful; I will also stir up my servants to awaken him by a more sharp and searching manner; and if these new efforts be blessed to him all shall yet be well, thy grace magnified, and his soul saved; if not, then thou shalt cut him down.

If under means of grace
No fruits of grace appear,
It is a dreadful case;

Tho' GOD may long forbear,
At length he'll strike the threaten'd blow,
And lay the barren fig-tree low.

A P R A Y E R for Christian Graces.

HOLY, holy Lord God Almighty, who art, and wast, and art to come; who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou art the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hast immortality; dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see. Thou art a God at hand, and a God afar off; none can hide himself in secret places where thou canst not see him, for thou fillest heaven and earth; thine eyes are in every place beholding the evil and the good; thou searchest the heart, and triest the reins, even the thoughts and intents of the heart are naked and open before thee.

I know, O Lord, that thou canst do every thing; power belongs to thee, and with thee nothing is impossible; what thou hast promised thou art able also to perform. Thou art good, and dost good; good to all, and thy tender mercy is over all thy works: O that thou wouldest cause thy goodness to pass before me, that I may taste and see that the Lord is good and have his loving-kindness always before mine eyes.

O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face before thee, my God; for my iniquities are increased over my head, and my trespass is grown up unto the heavens; behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth, and put my mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, crying out, Unclean, unclean. "If I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, that also shall prove me perverse; for if thou contend with me, I am not able to answer thee one in a thousand: Behold I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin did my mother conceive me; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" My understanding being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in me, because of the blindness of my heart.

I have within me a carnal mind, which is enmity against God; my neck has been as an iron sinew, and I have made my heart as an adamant; I have refused to hearken, have pulled away the shoulder, and have stopped my ears like the deaf adder: O how I have hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof? I have forgotten God, and lived as without God in the world. My heart hath walked after vanity and become vain. I have set my affections on things beneath, have followed after lying vanities, and forsaken my own mercies. I have forsaken the living waters, for cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water: there is in me a bent to backslide from the living God; my heart is

deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, it starts aside like a broken bow. "The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint; from the sole of the feet, even to the head, there is no soundness in me, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores."

LORD, I come to thee as the poor publican, and I pray his prayer, "God be merciful unto me, a sinner;" the God of infinite mercy be merciful to me. O wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. O purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow; hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Let me be justified freely by thy grace, through the redemption of JESUS: Take away all mine iniquity, and receive me graciously; heal my backslidings, and love me freely; and let thy anger be turned away from me, for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will say unto God, do not condemn me, but deliver me from going down into the pit, for thou hast found a ransom. I have sinned, Father, against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; but I have an Advocate with Thee, JESUS CHRIST the righteous, and he is the propitiation for my sin. LORD, remember the true David, and all his troubles; remember all his offerings, and accept his burnt-sacrifice; and turn not away the face of thine Anointed, who by his own blood is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for men. Remember

the covenant in his blood, and be merciful to mine unrighteousness, and my sins and my iniquities remember no more.

Let me be justified by faith, and have peace with God through JESUS CHRIST, and through him let me have access to that grace wherein believers stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. O make me hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which sin has broken may rejoice. Let the blood of CHRIST speak better things than that of Abel; let it speak pardon and peace to my soul; let it purge my conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Let thy Spirit witness with my spirit that I am a child of God, and a joint-heir with CHRIST; say to my soul, that thou art my salvation.

LORD, give me a wise and understanding heart; that which I know not, teach thou me; let the Spirit of truth guide me into all truth, and make me to understand wherein I have erred. Make thy way plain before my face, because of mine observers; and by the teaching of thy Word and Spirit make me wise unto salvation. Unto me, LORD, let it be given to believe, for the faith by which I am saved is not of myself, it is the gift of God: LORD, increase my faith, and perfect what is lacking in it, that I may be strong in faith, giving glory to God. Let every word of thine profit me, being mixed with faith; and enable me to look above the things that are seen, which are temporal, to the things that are unseen, which are eternal; let my heart be purified by faith,

and enable me by faith to overcome the world, to resist the adversary, and to live continually upon JESUS, drawing out of his fulness grace for grace.

Unite my heart to fear thy name, that I may keep thy commandments: O put thy fear into my heart, that I may never depart from thee; let me be in the fear of the LORD all the day long. Deliver me from all slavish fear that hath torment, and give me a filial fear, that I may never wilfully offend against thee more.

Give me grace, I beseech thee, to love thee, the LORD my GOD, with all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; to delight myself always in thee, and therein shall I have the desire of my heart. O circumcise my heart to love thee, that I may live; O may the love of GOD be shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. O that JESUS may be very precious to me, as he is to all that believe; that he may be in my account the chiefest of ten thousand, and altogether lovely; and though I have not seen him, yet may I love him, and by believing in him may rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Let the love of CHRIST to me constrain me to live, not to myself, but to him that died for me, and rose again.

Lord, put upon me that charity which is the bond of perfectness, that I may keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and may live in love and peace, that the GOD of love and peace may be with me,

Give me to love my neighbour as myself, with that love which is the fulfilling of the law; to love him with a pure heart fervently. Give me, O Lord, the love of the brethren; and enable me to be kindly affectioned towards them in brotherly love, that I may know I am passed from death unto life, and all may know that I am thy disciple. Lord, make me able to love mine enemies; to bless them that curse me, and to pray for them that despitefully use me; forbearing them and forgiving them, as, I trust, thou for Christ's sake hast forgiven me.

Lord, give me grace to deny myself, to take up my cross daily, and to follow Christ; to keep under the body, and to bring it into subjection; let me learn of Christ to be meek and lowly in heart, that I may find rest to my soul; hide pride from me, and clothe me with humility; and put upon me the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in thy sight is of great price: let anger never rest in my bosom, nor the sun go down upon my wrath, but enable me to shew all meekness towards all men: let me have bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering; that being merciful, as my Father which is in heaven is merciful, I may be perfect as he is perfect.

Lord, teach me in every state to be content; let my conversation be without covetousness; may I always be content with such things as I have; still saying, the will of the Lord be done. Lord, give me grace to weep as though I wept not, and to rejoice as though I rejoiced not,

and to buy as though I possessed not, and use this world as not abusing it, because the time is short, and the fashion of this world passeth away. May the very God of peace sanctify me wholly; and I pray God my whole spirit, and soul and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Let goodness and mercy follow me all the days of my life: when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, be thou with me, that I may fear no evil; let thy rod and thy staff comfort me. Redeem my soul from the power of the grave, and receive me; guide me by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory, through JESUS CHRIST my blessed LORD and Savior; to whom, with Thee and the holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, thanksgiving and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER for the Grace of PERSEVERANCE.

ETERNAL God, with whom is everlasting strength, thou art able to keep us from falling, and to perform the good work begun in us, till the day of JESUS CHRIST. But, LORD, thou knowest how weak and changeable I am, how wavering, and bent to backsliding; how apt to decline and fall off, after I have been set up, and put in a good hopeful way heaven-ward; and in what danger still to undo myself, after all the great things thou hast done for me. O Lord of love, have pity on my infirmities, and strengthen me in my weakness. Preserve me, thou blessed Guardian

of thy people, who keepest the feet of thy saints; O preserve me from the danger of apostacy, and falling away from any good beginnings, to which thy grace has ever wrought me: And put thy fear in my heart, that I may not depart from thee. Make me so firmly thine, that nothing which befalls me in the world, may ever part thee and my soul: and make me so resolute for thy service, that nothing which any can say or do may interrupt me in, or take me off from that way of life which is above to the wise, to depart from hell beneath. O let me not be of the number of those that draw back to perdition: but of their happy number, who do believe to the saving of the soul.

O LOR D God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand; go on, I pray thee, to work for the glory of thy name, and to perfect that which concerns me. Thou hast been my help, leave me not, nor forsake me, O God of my salvation; but hold thou me up, and I shall be safe, and I will have respect to thy statutes continually. Establish, O LOR D, strengthen, settle me; and leave me no will or power to resist the gracious designs and methods of thy love and mercy, for the healing and saving of my soul. And as I, by my frailty, do still renew my sins, gracious LOR D, through thy mercy, renew me to repentance; and though I fall, let me not utterly be cast down, but uphold me by thy almighty hand; preserve me to thy heavenly kingdom, and keep me by thy power, through faith to salvation. O make me so faithful unto death, that

thou mayest give me the crown of life, so to endure to the end, that I may be saved; that in the end of my life I may receive the glorious consummation of all my hopes, that blessed end of my faith, the eternal salvation of my soul, through JESUS CHRIST, my dear LORD and Saviour. Amen.

A PRAYER for a CHILD.

GLORY be to thee, O LORD, in whom I live, and move, and have my being; who hast preserved me ever since I was born.

I humbly worship thee, O LORD, my heavenly Father, through JESUS CHRIST, my Redeemer; O give me thy grace, that I may faithfully serve thee all the days of my life: Wash me from the guilt of my sins in the fountain of CHRIST's precious blood; save me daily by thy grace from the practice of sin; let thy good Spirit restrain, and cleanse the corruption of my nature; help me to remember thee, my Creator, in the days of my youth; preserve me from those errors and follies, to which the frailty of my age does most expose me, and keep me innocent from every great offence; deliver me from lying and vanity, from picking and stealing, from swearing and sabbath-breaking, and from the temptations of evil company.

Incline my heart to all that is good, that I may be modest and humble, true and just, meek and kind, temperate and diligent, respectful and obedient to all my superiors; that I may fear and love thee above all, and my neighbour as myself. Let thy good providence defend me from all evil

night and day; let the grace of thy holy Spirit continually prevent and assist me; bless me in my learning, and help me daily to increase in knowledge, and wisdom, and in all virtues; instruct me, O LORD, more and more in the truths of thy holy word, and in the knowledge of thy salvation, that I may live holily, die comfortably, and be eternally happy in thy kingdom of bliss and glory.

Bless all my dear friends, relations, and benefactors; grant to them whatever may be good for them in this life, and guide them and me to everlasting happiness in thy kingdom, through JESUS CHRIST, my dear Lord and Saviour. Amen. Our Father, &c.

AN ADDRESS before PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Lord, I am now in thy house, assist me, I pray thee, and accept of my services: Let thy holy Spirit help my infirmities disposing my heart to seriousness, attention, and devotion; to the honour of thy holy name, and the benefit of my soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After the SERVICE is done.

BLESSED be thy name, O Lord, for this opportunity of attending thee in thy house and service: Make me, I pray thee, a doer of thy word, and not an hearer only; accept both us and our services, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

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